3 vols
30/

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

823
W734
v. 1

A

WINTER

IN

PARIS;

OR

MEMOIRS OF MADAME DE C****:

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HENRY COLBURN,

ENGLISH AND FOREIGN PUBLIC LIBRARY,

GONDUIT-STREET, NEW BOND-STREET.

1811.

E. Clarke, Printer, Well-Street, London.

PN734
v.1

A WINTER IN PARIS.

CHAP. I.

Con cor tremante, et con tremante piede.
Fugge la tapinella, e non sà dove:
In ciò ch'intorno ascolta, in ciò che vede,
Vede di nuovo horror, sembianze nove.
Lieve arbossel, cui debil aura fide,
Lieve Augullin che geme, ò che si move,
Lieve foglia che cade, ò che si scote,
Di terror doppio, il dubbio cor percote.

ARIOSTO.

THE first years of my life present nothing to my recollection but scenes of hardship and misery. I was born amidst the bleak mountains of St. Bernardine, in Switzerland; and my father, Paul Hartz, was by birth and occupa-

NN 1439, MARSHALL

tion a shepherd; his habitation was an ill-built disjointed cottage, and stood at the foot of one of the highest hills. Stupendous precipices, foaming torrents, and eternal storms, distinguished this dreary abode, and the toilsome monotony of a shepherd's life early became my dislike and aversion: their occupations, uniform and unvaried as the returning seasons, admit of little description. In summer they lead their flocks to crop the fragrant herbage, which hangs upon the brow of the mountain; and in winter they descend to seek pasturage in the plain beneath, while the females of the family repair the cloathing and prepare their homely fare, to which they frequently return accompanied by the way-faring stranger; and when the frugal repast is ended, eagerly crowd around him, and listen to his recital of difficulties encountered, and dangers overcome.

As the Swiss peasantry are early taught to read and write, histories, plays, and similar books of amusement, are selected and read aloud during the winter evenings; but the uproar of contending elements, and the rude blast driving the sleet and snow through each aperture of their creaking, feeble sheds, rendered the voice of the reader indistinct and tremulous, while the fluttering flame is nearly extinguished in the lamp. On Sundays and festivals they assemble, clad in their best attire, and rudely dance to the sound of the flagelet and tabor; but to me their amusements or labours were equally irksome, and I received the coarse courtship of the peasant youths with a disgust and sense of superiority, which I endeavoured without success to conceal.

Though my father's family consisted of two sons and another daughter, yet

I appeared destined to undergo all those miseries of servitude which the harshness and ill-humour of the woman who called herself my mother could possibly inflict. My sister, who had always been the object of her preference, was as remarkable for the homeliness of her appearance as I was said to be for the beauty of mine; but no one ever, in her hearing, commended the form or features of Giovanna, without exciting her indignation, and incurring her displeasure: any of those transient, yet powerful attractions which attend the bloom of opening youth, and expand or wither, according to the smiles or frowns of fortune, my mother took pains to diminish as much as possible, by sending me, at day-break, to follow a few ragged, ill-favoured goats to pasture up the rugged cliffs, my cloathing too scanty to resist the cold, and without any other provision to al-

lay my hunger, rendered sharper by the keen air of the mountain, than a bag of coarse oatmeal and a jug of water, either shivering with cold, or scorched by the rays of the sun, my feet wounded and bleeding; and by the point of the rock I was forced to pursue my flocks in all their wanderings, and bring them in safety home at night; but my return was never greeted by the smile of endearment, or the soft accents of maternal love. This mode of life would have been utterly insupportable, had I not been able to read; therefore, while the goats were brousing on the summits of the cliffs, I seated myself below, and beguiling the tediousness of the day, indulged my imagination with the charms of poetry, and the splendid imagery of romance. My fifteenth year was completed, when I had the misfortune to lose one

of the goats as I was returning home: this circumstance exasperated my mother, and excited an unusual degree of ferocity; she flew at me with the rage of a tigress, and, laying hold of a log of wood, would probably have killed me, had not one of her sons, who happened to be in the house at the time, interfered: he could not, however, stop the torrent of invective: she loaded me with every epithet of abuse which language could supply, and among other things, declared her detestation of beggars and strangers, and execrated that folly which had induced her to waste her children's bread upon others, and threatened vengeance, which, though delayed, should fall heavy at last: she added a great deal more, which was beyond my comprehension, but I understood enough to resolve on making

my escape, and leaving for ever a mode of life which appeared to me intolerable. But it was at the hazard of bewildering myself among the mountains, and of becoming a prey to wild beasts, that I set out on the following morning with my flock, determined to bid them adieu for ever; and having provided myself with an additional quantity of oatmeal, a tinder-box, my Sunday clothes, and leaving the goats to return home, or not, just as they pleased, I quickened my pace considerably, and reached the valley of Mesox as the sun had nearly finished its course. I paused to draw my breath, uncertain which path to choose: observing a lake at some distance, I approached the banks, in hope of discovering some person who might direct me to a neighbouring town or village; but the only objects which I could discern were inanimate: all was still

and silent, except the breeze sighing among the reeds which skirted the waters of the lake. I pursued my journey; the evening was closing fast, and the mist began to gather upon the mountain, and roll along the valley, without my having been able to distinguish any habitation whatever: weary, anxious, and uneasy, I reluctantly beheld the sun sink in the horizon, and withdraw from me his friendly beams. Exhausted with fatigue, I threw myself on the ground, and remained there for some time in a state of listless languor: my mind, harassed and bewildered, was incapable of farther exertion, and I viewed with apprehension and alarm the circumstance of remaining all night exposed to the changes of the atmosphere, or the attacks of savages, either of the human or brute kind. The moon, however, suddenly rising, discovered to me, on the right, a spacious cavern,

partly concealed by hanging wood, which appeared to offer a place of security and repose: I arose, and drawing near, determined to take shelter there for the night; and gathering a few dried sticks and herbs, I kindled a fire at the mouth of the cave, and kneading some oatmeal, made my usual evening repast. It was not long, however, before I felt a curiosity to examine the interior of my asylum, and seizing a brand, began to advance cautiously, treading upon loose stones and decayed leaves:—but I had not proceeded far, when the light flashed upon an object which froze the blood in my veins, and, for a few moments, rooted my feet to the ground. I beheld an enormous she-wolf extended on the ground, suckling her whelps: she fixed her glaring eyes on the torch, and snarling gnashed her white teeth, but dazzled by the rays of light remained motionless. I

gazed for a few moments in speechless dread, and then uttering a cry of terror, hastily dropt the light, and fled to the mouth of the cave: but a storm which had long been gathering began to rage violently, and though accustomed from my infancy to hear the thunder roar among the mountains, and echo from overhanging cliffs, yet I seemed to hear it for the first time: I knelt down behind some loose fragments of stone, and concealing my face with my hands, remained long in this position, fearful lest the flashes of lightning should discover the she-wolf in pursuit of me. The rain soon began to fall in torrents, and before it ceased, and ere day-light returned, I issued forth, fearful and trembling, and pursued the winding path which led among the hills, often starting at the rustling of the wind, and pelting of the rain, fancying I heard the footsteps

of the savage tenants of the shade in every breeze.

I had quitted the cavern, and travelled most of the following day, at hazard, and without seeing any habitation or descrying a human form, when towards evening I joyfully distinguished the tinkling of the shepherd's bell, and advancing towards the spot from whence it proceeded, soon perceived an elderly man sitting in the cleft of a rock, with a book in his hand: he raised his head at my approach, and listened kindly and attentively to my complaints of destitution, and entreaties that he would direct me to some neighbouring village, where I might find refreshment and repose: laying his book aside, and smiling benevolently as he spoke—

"You seem fatigued, my child," said he, "and the nearest town, Bellinzone, is five leagues distant; but in

hat direction (pointing to the setting sun) stands a house, formerly the monastery of St. Zuric; and though the order has, like others, been lately abolished, yet the community still exists, and I am told continues to exercise the sacred duties of hospitality and benevolence: it is two leagues distant, and I fear you will lose your way: I cannot escort you thither myself, but my dog shall accompany you; he is a brave fellow, and was never known to lead a stranger astray, and formerly belonged to the monks of St. Gothard; many a man has he saved from perishing in the snow; he will return to me when you have reached the convent." So saying, he called his dog, and pointing to me, the dog immediately placed himself at my side:—"Now, my child," said the old man, "begin your march, and may God bless you!" Having thanked him a

thousand times, I followed my faithful companion, and in about two hours reached the end of my journey, and applied for admittance at the gate of the convent.

CHAP. II.

Like as a ship with dreadful storm long toss'd,
Having spent all her masts and her ground-hold,
Now far from harbour, likely to be lost;
At last some fisher-bark doth near behold,
That giveth comfort to her courage cold.

SPENSER.

THE monastery of St. Zuric is situated at the foot of Mount Cenere, one of that chain of mountains formerly called Retian Alps; the buildings are spacious, and form three sides of a square, commanding a superb and extensive view over the Lake Maggiore, as far as Locarno, and you can easily distinguish the lofty mountains which separate La Vallais from Italy. During those disturbances which convulsed the

continent of Europe, at the conclusion of the last and beginning of the present century, this monastery fared like all institutions of a similar description—the gates were thrown open, the chapel pillaged of every valuable ornament, and prohibitions issued against any future vows of everlasting poverty and seclusion. The revenues of the convent were for a while suspended; but the prioress, who was related to one of the Emperor's generals (St. Hilaire), possessed sufficient interest to recover them in part, and she remained in the monastery, together with several individuals of her community, some of whom had returned thither after having in vain endeavoured to revive, by their presence, the kindness of their relatives, and having, as is usually the case, on this occasion been disappointed, they had resumed their usual avocations, with the same, or even greater alacrity

than when secured by iron bars, and shackled by irremediable vows. The monastic dress was still worn, though with some trifling alteration: in lieu of the tight bandage over the forehead, and stiff hood, insupportable in hot weather, their hair was confined under a round-eared cap, and over this they threw a loose veil whenever they went to chapel: instead of the flowing robe, leathern belt, and rosary, their dress was made to fit tight to the shape, and their beads were suspended in their cells. The church-service and religious duties were performed with zeal and regularity; and although they had liberty to adopt any form of worship they pleased, they nevertheless adhered to their original tenets, and continued to perform the duties of piety and charity with unabated devotion and constancy.

It was late when I applied for ad-

mittance: the prioress and most of the community had retired to rest, and the porteress was preparing to close the gates for the night, when the barking of the dog gave notice of my approach. After having answered several questions satisfactorily, I was permitted to enter the Monastery of St. Zuric, and an old nun was ordered to conduct me to a cell on the ground-floor, usually occupied on similar occasions: she accordingly led the way, and throwing open the door, I hastily entered, while she placed the light on the table and left me: presently returning with some bread, fruit, and country wine, she was extremely loquacious, and entertained me with an account of the number of strangers and pilgrims relieved by the community, and concluded by informing me that she would return early on the following morning to present me to the prioress.

Notwithstanding the fatigue of two preceding days, I arose the next morning at my usual hour, and began to examine my apartment: opposite the bed stood a table with a crucifix and hour glass, and the window, which opened into the garden, appeared to be secured by iron bars; but these were almost concealed by the leaves of a vine, whose tendrils crept round them, and on opening the casement the notes of the thrush and nightingale echoed sweetly in the distance, and the breeze wafted the odours of the plants. I continued enjoying their fragrance for a considerable time, and my thoughts naturally bent towards my precarious situation; the retrospection was disastrous and alarming: the future, though veiled in obscurity, seemed to offer few motives of consolation, and to take its colour from the past. I determined however to reveal to the prioress every

circumstance respecting my flight from St. Bernardine, and my motives for doing so, and relying on her humanity, claim protection, and solicit a permanent asylum under her roof. In order to prepare myself for this interview, I selected my Sunday clothes, and put them on. The dress of a female Swiss peasant is eminently calculated to display with advantage any beauty of form or grace of deportment: it consists of a short petticoat of coloured cloth, decorated with rows of ribbon, disposed according to the fancy of the wearer; a jacket with slashed sleeves considerably above the elbow; a short mantle and broad brimed hat is also worn; sandals and coloured stockings complete the costume; the hair is twisted in braids, and fastened with a bodkin: nature had given me a profusion of auburn tresses, which, as they curled naturally, did not require

much art to arrange in a becoming manner; and my shape, which was full and well rounded, made the coarse materials of my dress less discernible.

I followed the old nun silently into the presence of the prioress, who was sitting working at the farther end of a long apartment, with several females standing behind her, attentive to her commands. Madame De St. Zuric was a pleasing good looking woman, about forty-five years of age, who had assumed the monastic dress at a time of life when it might fairly be concluded she had sufficiently experienced what the world affords, and how little she was likely to lose when she quitted it: her figure, which was on a large scale, might yet be called handsome; and her countenance, placid and smiling, did not bear a single trace of disappointed affection, or corroding regret: always in good humour with her-

self, and inclined to be friendly and good-natured to others, she was much beloved by her community; and the neighbouring peasantry, whose distresses she relieved, were loud in her praises: indeed, she was seldom known to withhold relief or consolation from the destitute and oppressed, and any apprehensions which I might be supposed to feel on my entrance were quickly dispelled by the kindness and condescension with which she interrogated me, and listened to my replies: perceiving that at first I hesitated and appeared abashed, she dismissed her attendants, mildly desiring that I would recommence my narrative. I immediately complied, and after expatiating on the hardships which I had undergone on my native mountains, and recounting the difficulties attending my escape, requested she would become the disposer of my future destiny; and

ward off further disasters from my head. Madame De St. Zuric paused a considerable time, and looking attentively at me, said:—

"I cannot believe but that from the midst of so many perils the hand of St. Zuric guided you hither, I therefore receive you as such, and shall extend to you my protection accordingly."

Saying this she clapped her hands, and several nuns entering, "St. Ignatia," said she to one of them, "take this child under your immediate care: our holy patron has bestowed her upon us, therefore let her be educated as becomes our child; conduct her to the refectory, and let her occupy a cell adjoining your own at night."

Ignatia smiled, and replied, that she joyfully accepted the trust, and gently led me from the apartment we were in into a spacious saloon, where the community, consisting of seventy or

eighty nuns, were seated at breakfast, listening to one who was reading aloud: in about half an hour they all arose, and several of them formed a circle round me, asking a variety of questions: one admired my dress, another, lightly touching a few loose curls, declared that my hair resembled the gold silks which they used in their embroidery; others commended the beauty of my face, and extolled the shape of my hands and arms, and all expressed their pleasure on hearing that I was to remain among them, and invited me to their respective cells. My guardian and friend Ignatia, to whose care and instructions I am indebted for most of those advantages which education procures, and which I at present possess, appeared about thirty years of age: her person, above the middle height, seemed to have lost much of its former proportion and beauty: enough of this re-

mained however to make her highly interesting: an inexpressible grace and softness was diffused over every look and motion; long black eye-brows and eye-lashes gave some degree of animation to her expressive countenance, notwithstanding the habitual languor and dejection so visibly marked in every well-turned feature, and when she smiled, seemed to give additional charms to one of the most interesting countenances I ever beheld. The events of her life (which I shall shortly have occasion to relate) connected with several circumstances mentioned in the following memoirs, appeared to have had a considerable effect in undermining her health; and that awful event which must inevitably happen to all seemed suspended over her by a single thread; but the piety of her life gave her every rational hope of happiness in another, and she viewed death as the end

of suffering, not the termination of existence. So numerous are the occurrences which press upon my recollection, so many are the events which I have to relate; my pen must glide swiftly over those which took place during the early period of my residence at the monastery of St. Zuric: suffice it to say that I was completely instructed in the different accomplishments of female education, while my mind was enlightened and improved by the conversation of Ignatia, who caused me also to excel in various curious pieces of work, and soon taught me to blend my voice with the soft tones of the harp, and to unite with the sacred choir in hymns of praise. In the seclusion of a monastic life, the history of a day is that of a week, month, or year. I attended divine service at sun-rise in the chapel, and after breakfast received instructions in

drawing and reading; while the extensive and fragrant gardens which surrounded us often attracted our steps, which, together with conversation, writing, and working, engaged the remainder of the day.

The lady prioress frequently required my attendance in her apartment, examined me as to the progress which I had made in my studies, and commended or disapproved as she thought proper; but her indulgence seldom permitted her to find fault, and her daughter Giovanna, as she was pleased to call me, was more frequently dismissed with rewards than afflicted by reprimands.

CHAP. III.

"What is our bliss, that changeth with the moon,
"And day of life, that darkens ere 'tis noon."

TIME moves rapidly away when it finds us engaged in the acquirement of knowledge, or in the pursuit of interesting and elegant accomplishments; and I had unperceived completed the twelfth month of my residence in the monastery of St. Zuric, when I had the anguish of perceiving my friend and companion, my instructress, my dear Ignatia, daily more indisposed, and less able to attend to her usual employments: perfectly aware as to the nature of her complaint, and thoroughly sensible how little aid she could derive from medicine, she

refused the attendance of the physician, and contenting herself with pleading exemption from the church service during the night, she passed most of her time in reading and writing in her cell: I never left her during the day, and frequently arose in the night to watch the progress of her illness, my anxiety not permitting me to enjoy repose. It was now the middle of the summer season, and the weather had been for several preceding days intensely hot: not a breath of air cooled the glowing atmosphere: nature seemed fading and expiring beneath the fervid heat: and Ignatia, alas! was drooping and withering never to revive again. One evening however, feeling herself better than usual, she expressed to me a wish of once more viewing the setting sun. I accompanied and supported her with mournful tenderness and anxious solicitude to an

eminence, from whence the eye wandered at pleasure over an extensive prospect of hanging wood, broken rocks, and all that wild magnificent scenery peculiar to Switzerland. The shining glacier rose at a distance tinged with a thousand colours by the setting sun, whose departure appeared to restore life and animation to the birds, plants, and insects around: soft dews began to ascend, and the moon, rising its silver crescent from behind a forest of pine trees to the left, completed the beauty, freshness, and tranquillity of the scene: we soon reached a seat, and after admiring the serenity of the evening, and enjoying the exhilirating charms of twilight, I insensibly began to discourse on the occurrences of my life in the mountains of St. Bernardine; and contrasted the harshness of my maternal relatives to the soft and tender attentions of that friend who listened

to me with all the indulgence of friendship.

"My dear Giovanna," replied she, "your appearance forcibly recals to my recollection that of a friend long since numbered among the dead: the same blue eyes, the same auburn curly hair: in disposition alone you differ: she was gentle and timid; you are fearless and undaunted. In relating to you her history, you will have my own also; of a melancholy nature indeed, but which may serve as a caution against the emotions of rage and resentment, which, if indulged, frequently plunge us into an abyss of crime and misery: I am strongly persuaded that you will yet act a busy part in the field of life; listen therefore attentively to what I shall relate.

"My father, Major James Monro, and Colonel Charles Montgomery, natives of Scotland, had long been united

by the strongest ties of friendship; they had served together in the 42d on the continent, and braved the heat of the torrid zone in Jamaica. While the pestilential fever raged there, spreading death and destruction around, each had in turn set its fury at defiance, and remained days and nights suspended over the couch of contagion and pestilence, administering relief and consolation to his friend, struggling with disease and death. At the end of five years the regiment was ordered home, but in the meantime Cecilia Biars, the only daughter of an opulent planter in Port-Royal, had attracted Colonel Montgomery's attention; the marriage accordingly took place, and soon afterwards they returned to England. Cecilia, like most Creoles, had sparkling black eyes, good teeth, pallid complexion, and black hair; her figure, below the middle size, was slight and elastic; her

disposition, on most occasions, denoted tranquillity and good-nature: not easily irritated, she appeared indifferent about the events of life; but her passions of resentment, if once excited, knew no control; they raged with the violence of the tornado, and she would with her own hands have sacrificed any object which stood in the way of her revenge. This violence of temper, seldom or ever called forth, did not prevent her from being beloved by her family and acquaintance: she idolized her husband, who deserved and returned her love in a rational manner; but if he had any enthusiasm in his composition, it leaned to the side of friendship. Colonel Montgomery was universally congratulated on his marriage with so opulent and lovely a woman; he soon afterwards sold out: his wife's fortune, already considerable, had lately been much increased by the death of her

father, he therefore purchased an estate near Inverness in Scotland, and went to reside there.

"My father, Major Monro, also married: he had long been attached to a lady named Duff, but want of fortune on his side had hitherto forbid their union; however, on his return from abroad, his constancy and assiduity, together with my mother's predilection, so softened the heart of my grandfather, that he consented to the marriage, bestowing on them, together with his blessing, what in his circumstances was extremely desirable—five thousand pounds. My father afterwards purchased a farm, within three miles of his friend's estate, retiring upon half-pay. Few domestic circles could boast of so much happiness; enjoying all the ease and some of the elegancies of life; respected by a select number of estimable friends, with the

assistance of books and rural sports, they despoiled old Time of his wrinkles, and made him dance joyous and jocund along.

"My brother Arthur was born a twelvemonth after my father's marriage, and three years afterwards, Veronica Montgomery and I saw the light on the same day, and shared all the lively joys and transient griefs of childhood: the same masters instructed us; the same table fed us; we equally enjoyed the tenderness of my father and mother, and Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery's house was like theirs, common to us all. Arthur, Veronica, and Cecilia were seldom seen asunder, and if one of the three was absent, the others refused to join in any sport or partake of any pastime.

"I shall not undertake to trace to you, my dear Giovanna, the progress of that affection between my brother and Miss

Montgomery, so lively in childhood, so ardent in youth, and so lasting, that I firmly believe he is as much attached at this moment as ever, though years have rolled on since they parted to meet no more. Veronica was completely beautiful; large blue eyes, fair complexion, good teeth, auburn hair, her graceful step, and well-turned shape, procured her the appellation of the Northern Star: her disposition was gentle and engaging; her deportment, mild and obliging, completed the conquests which her beauty attracted. My brother, now eighteen, was sent to study at Edinburgh, with Professor Stewart, a man eminent for talents and learning; and during one of the vacations returned home to Inverness-shire, accompanied by Mr. George Pelham, eldest son of a gentleman in Norfolk. He was past twenty, his person well-made, and his manners graceful and

pleasing: heir to a considerable landed property, most houses were open for his reception; he was, however, unassuming and modest; and though an excellent education had given him every opportunity of doing so, he never pressed his information upon others, or sought to instruct those who merely desired to be amused. On leaving the university, he had made the tour of France, Italy, and Spain, and returned to England fraught with materials for compiling an interesting publication; when passing through Edinburgh, on his road to the Highlands, he was introduced to the acquaintance of Professor Stewart, and then became familiar with my brother, who prevailed upon Mr. Pelham to make our house his own, during his continuance in the North of Scotland.

"Soon after their arrival in Inverness-shire, my father and Colonel Montgo-

mery had dined at a neighbouring meeting of country gentlemen, and heated by wine, which had circulated freely, unfortunately differed in opinion respecting some late military transaction; and some severe retorts having been made, those friends, who had fought side by side, and defended each other's life at the hazard of his own, retired to an adjoining room, with pistols, to settle the dispute. My father fired first, and the ball entering Colonel Montgomery's right shoulder, passed through his lungs; he fell, and in an instant was covered with blood. The door was forced open, and a surgeon called, who pronounced the wound to be mortal. Colonel Montgomery beckoned to the attendants, to prevent their acquainting his family, as was proposed, with what had happened; and seizing my father's hand with a cold convulsive grasp, faintly said—'Dear James, we

have been equally to blame; let us exchange forgiveness; and may the Almighty as freely pardon us both as I forgive you!' He was proceeding to mention his wife and child, when a violent fit of coughing came on, attended with an effusion of blood, and he fainted away in my father's arms, and went off without a struggle. Alas! we were as yet ignorant of this dreadful event. The sun had risen as bright as usual on the morning of that fatal day, nor had any presentiment of misfortune distinguished it: we were on the point of conducting Mrs. Montgomery and Veronica home, when a servant entered, with hurried step and pallid looks, saying that a horrible accident had happened to his master and Colonel Montgomery. Arthur, followed by George Pelham, instantly darted out of the house to give and procure assistance, while we remained for some mo-

ments motionless, dreading to discover the truth: at last, Mrs. Montgomery ran hastily down the road leading to her own house; and meeting those who were bearing the dead body of her husband, she lost for a moment all consciousness of her misery; but when she recovered her recollection, and found that he had fallen by my father's hand, rage and indignation drove away the apathy of despair: she uttered the wildest threats and execrations; the violence of her natural disposition appearing in full force; and, exhausted at length by the power of her passion, she suffered Veronica to conduct her to her own apartment. My father also returned home; but how haggard, how altered his appearance! — His dress was disordered, his clothes stained with blood; he seemed unconscious of surrounding objects, and regardless of his wife and children, who were

kneeling and weeping before him: suddenly tearing himself from our embraces, he retreated to his study, and remained there, inaccessible to our prayers and entreaties for admittance, while we passed the whole of that dreadful night alternately lamenting with tears and anguish the deplorable death of my father's friend, and with horror anticipating yet greater woes to come.

"My mother, one of the most excellent of women, deeply impressed by a sense of religion, received the events of life with dignified composure, as proceeding from the dictates of unerring wisdom. She had fulfilled the duties of a wife in an exemplary manner, and on the present trying occasion retained all her wonted fortitude and resignation. She had soon the misery of beholding the partner of her life, the object of her earliest affection,

tried by a court-martial for the murder of his friend and benefactor, and she remained long in dreadful suspense as to the event. He was, however, acquitted; but no jury could acquit him to his own conscience, or blot out the remembrance of his friend and benefactor, expiring in consequence of wounds inflicted by his hand. Mrs. Montgomery and Veronica remained inaccessible to us, nor could my brother, with all the ingenuity of love, effect an interview. One night, having sat up later than usual, I was preparing to retire, when approaching a window which opened into the shrubbery, I discovered a female figure standing at a distance. I threw up the sash—it beckoned me. I ran down stairs, and crossing a short gravel walk, advanced hastily, and in an instant my darling Veronica was in my arms: it was long ere the weeping girl could tell me that

she had escaped unknown to her mother to bid me farewel; that Mrs. Montgomery remained inflexible in her resentment, and had forbade her ever seeing us more; that she understood they were soon to leave Scotland, and to go abroad, but she knew not whither; that Arthur would always continue to be the object of her affection. 'And if,' continued she, 'I am never to see him more, bid him keep this for my sake.'

"So saying, she unbound the ribbon which confined her curly glossy hair, and was hastening away: I entreated her to return again, if possible, which she promised; but this short interview, alas! was the last: I never again saw the companion of my childhood, the sister of my heart. Mrs. Montgomery, Veronica, and a few attendants, left Scotland the following week, nor could we ever succeed in discovering the

place of their retreat, but I always remained in doubt whether my brother was equally unsuccessful, or whether he had not found means of seeing his beloved before she went away. When I gave him the ribbon worn by Veronica, repeating to him her injunction that he would keep it for her sake, he rapturously pressed it to his lips, and placing it in his bosom, retired without speaking, nor did I ever afterwards hear him mention her name. George Pelham, whose attentions to us were unremitted, prevailed upon his friend to return with him to England, with the view of engaging his father, Mr. Pelham's patronage, in procuring for Arthur some civil employment abroad. Before they left us, I had the happiness of exchanging vows of affection with Mr. Pelham, and of seeing them authorized by my dear mother, who

had long viewed him with the partiality of a parent.

"Soon after their departure from Inverness-shire, my father's health evidently declined; a deep-rooted melancholy absorbed every faculty of his soul, and his senses often appeared disordered: he would speak incoherently, and mention former scenes of domestic bliss, as if they still existed, and frequently in conversation suddenly referred to his friend, as if he were yet among us. One evening, when the family were assembled in the supper room, and the table spread, he rose hastily, and going to the sideboard, took up a knife, and before we were in the least aware of his fatal design, plunged it into his throat. I am unable to describe the cruel scene which followed. My mother's usual fortitude and presence of mind forsook her:

distracted and bewildered, she disappeared, and it was a considerable time before the servants discovered her in a field near the house, concealed under a hedge. My father only survived four and twenty hours, remaining speechless to the last. Immediately after the funeral, we removed to my grandfather Duff's house, in Stirlingshire, and my attentions were all engrossed in attendance on my mother, whose recovery remained long doubtful. Mr. Pelham procured for his son the situation of private secretary to Lord Malmsbury, then ambassador at the court of France, and at the same time promised to sanction our union with his presence, immediately after his son's return from the continent.

My brother was to accompany George Pelham in the same capacity, and previous to their departure for Paris they came to us at Balmore. The ar-

rival of Mr. Pelham and of my brother excited the first emotions of pleasure which had arisen in my heart since Colonel Montgomery's death, and this was the first time I could enjoy or take any interest in surrounding objects. My grandfather Duff, at a very advanced age, rarely left the house; and my mother, now a confirmed invalid, seldom quitted her apartment, but she promoted as much as possible every innocent pastime, and, accompanied by the two friends, I enjoyed all the delights which the country affords, blest with their society, and forming schemes of future happiness, never, alas! to be realized. Time stole away unperceived, and they received orders to join the embassy. I have often taken a melancholy pleasure in retracing former scenes when I was in the midst of beloved connexions and surrounding friends, lost to me now for ever.

Standing as I do, on the brink of the grave, may I not hope again shortly to behold them? Will they not attend my dying moments, and be the first to welcome me to the regions of peace? And my dear father, and his friend, I may surely indulge the belief that you have ratified in heaven the exchange of forgiveness made upon earth, and are united in bonds of friendship, where no misunderstanding can ever take place.

"It was with difficulty," continued Ignatia, "that I summoned resolution to meet George Pelham with composure on the evening previous to their departure. We had already made every arrangement as to our future correspondence, and he promised himself that his absence should not exceed two years at the farthest. On entering the supper-room, my mother and Arthur were discoursing earnestly at one

of the windows. Mr. Pelham advanced hastily to meet me, and I spoke to him of his intended journey and departure with as much firmness as I could command, but declined making one at the supper table; for if it is difficult, under such circumstances, to speak without weeping, it is still more so to join the social board, when those whose presence form all the charm of it are about to be seen there for the last time.

"At one o'clock, my brother, looking at his watch, arose, and approaching my mother's chair, embraced her, and knelt to receive her blessing: she gave it impressively; and George Pelham bowed likewise at her feet, and in broken accents recommended us both to the care of heaven. My mother folded her arms round him, called him her son, and offered up prayers, mingled with tears, for our mutual happiness. She suddenly appeared faint

and overcome, I therefore immediately conducted her to her apartment, and in a few moments returned below, in hopes of finding George Pelham there; but they had purposely left the house immediately after we retired from the supper room, and were already on their journey. All our wishes now centered in the arrival of letters. My brother wrote frequently—Mr. Pelham more so: they reached Paris in safety; and every moment which I could command, independent of my attendance on my mother, was devoted to writing letters, and reading those which came from abroad.

"In a few months, however, my attention was wholly engaged by my dear and excellent parent, who was fast sinking under the weight of disease and languor. She had never recovered the death of my father, and the

absence of my brother heightened her dejection: her constitution, entirely debilitated, and incapable of resisting the attacks of disease, fatally gave way to an inflammation of the lungs, and she expired after a fortnight's severe suffering, eight months after she took leave of her son. My tears were still flowing over her grave, when I had to lament the loss of one, if possible, still dearer to me.

"I was sitting reading to my grandfather, whose increasing infirmities required my utmost attention, when a small packet was put into my hands, directed to my mother. I observed that it came from my brother, and eagerly opened it, but started on seeing the letters which I had written at different times to George Pelham: they fell from my trembling hands, and had death at that instant, with his icy fingers, grasped my heart, I should not

have felt a sharper pang. It was long ere I could see to read my brother's letter: a dimness shaded my eyes, and sickness oppressed my heart; but when I had recovered myself sufficiently to read it, you would scarcely believe me, Giovanna, were I to tell you, that I felt comparative joy at finding that it was not inconstancy which had robbed me of Mr. Pelham's affection, neither had he forsaken me for another woman, but had remained constant to the very last, repeatedly calling upon my name in the delirium of a fever, which terminated his existence on the fifth day. Arthur, who had never left him from the commencement of his illness, received his last sigh, and closed his eyes at five o'clock in the morning of the day in which he wrote to my mother. Ignorant of her death, he had requested she would prepare me for the disclosure of my misfortune. I lost

U. OF ILL. LIB.

for a time all sense of my misery—a long and dangerous illness commenced, as the harvest was beginning to ripen; and when at last I again became sensible of surrounding objects, the snow was on the ground, and icicles hanging in every direction. Though time and religion in some degree succeeded in healing the wounds and assuaging the disease of my mind, yet the world was a dreary blank, which appeared every day more irksome. My grandfather, a decripit old man, was my only remaining tie in England, and this frail existence was snapped asunder the following autumn. A will, made on the birth of Arthur, gave him possession of the Balmore estate, and my mother's fortune devolving upon me, nothing remained to retain me in Scotland; and joining a gentleman and his daughter who were going abroad to make the tour of the continent, I was

attracted by the beauty of this country, and at length became one of the members of the monastery of St. Zuric, and taking the veil, assumed the name of Ignatia, one of the patron saints, as is usual on such occasions; nor was the difference of religion any obstacle on my side, early taught that all religions are good, if practised with piety and purity of heart. My brother, after remaining some years abroad, returned to his paternal estate. I frequently hear from him, and if accident should ever conduct you to England, rest assured he will feel equal alacrity with myself, in affording you every protection, and assistance if necessary; and I will leave you a letter for this purpose, to be delivered or not, as circumstances may require."

Having thanked my friend, and expressed all the interest her history excited, and observing the lights in the

convent windows begin to fade, and the bell toll ten, we retired to our respective cells, with increased affection on my side; and on her's, repeated assurances of tenderness and regard.

CHAP. IV.

Anima bella da quel nodo sciolta,
Che più bel mai non seppe ordir natura;
Pon dan ciel menti alla mia vita ascura,
Da si liéti pensier a pianger volta.

PETRARCA.

BITTER are the sensations which crowd around the heart, as we fearfully behold the daily diminishing strength, and trace the increasing suffering of those we love: we turn away from the conviction which intrudes itself, that all our cares are vain, and that the grave is about to close upon our expectations, and we indulge the vicissitudes of hope and fear, scarcely less agonizing to the mind than the catastrophe which we apprehend. A few days after Ignatia had related to me the events of her life, her in-

disposition seemed rapidly to increase, and symptoms of approaching dissolution began to take place: unable to rise from her couch without assistance, she was with difficulty supported to an adjoining apartment, in order to enjoy better air and less confinement than in her cell: extreme difficulty of breathing, and an incessant cough, rendered conversation impracticable; and I usually sat by her side watching in silent anxiety the progress of her fatal disease.

One evening she beckoned me to her, and gasping for breath as she spoke, whilst the fever sparkled in her eyes, and crimsoned her cheeks:"

"Giovanna," said she, "I am dying, I feel that all will soon be over; the holy priest must immediately administer the last sacraments. "And, alas!" continued she, "pressing my hand, and gazing eagerly in my face with all that anxiety and anguish

which wrings the soul at the approach of death, "I am unable to draw my breath, or utter a prayer." I instantly dispatched a nun to the prioress, and informed her of Ignatia's request, who soon afterwards entered the apartment, followed by the Confessor Lomaria and several nuns, who surrounded in mournful silence the dying Ignatia. Prayers were read, and the faultering voice of the priest, and more audible grief of the nuns, gave testimony how much the object before us was loved, and lamented. Ignatia appeared wholly absorbed in mental devotion; and with clasped hands and uplifted eyes received the holy sacrament.

Dismissing the attendants, I remained alone with her during the night: she occasionally spoke, and thanked me for my affectionate care; conjured me to do my duty to God, and bid me

remember that life was very short; and enjoin'd me to think often of her. Alas! how needless was this last injunction! towards morning she appeared inclined to sleep: I smoothed her pillow, closed the curtains, and nearly overcome by grief, fatigue, and anxiety, lay down at the foot of the bed, and slept for a few moments; when suddenly recollecting myself, and half rising, I observed she was lying perfectly still; and I was again composing myself to sleep, when listening a few moments, expecting to hear her cough as usual, all was silent: I hastily arose, and drawing aside the curtain, perceived that she was gone for ever. One of the attendant nuns came in soon afterwards, and found me lying near the bed in a state of insensibility; and it was long ere she succeeded in bringing me to myself. Those who have like

me attended the last moments of a friend can alone understand the sensations I experienced, when returning recollection brought with it a retrospetcive veiw of the loss which I had sustained. The last trembling accents of Ignatia's voice still lingered in my ear: I beheld her struggling in the arms of death, while anguish had usurped the expression of a tenderness which was wont to beam in her expressive eyes; and when I heard the door of the cell open or close, the remembrance that she was no more struck upon my heart with additional pangs; and it was some days before the prioress, who condescended to visit and console me, could prevail upon me to join the community or leave my cell; in the interim, alas! they had performed the last sacred duties to my companion and friend: Ignatia was laid in the earth; but I never had resolution to inquire

on what particular day she was committed to the grave: and it was long before they pointed out to me the place where she reposed, distinguished by a cross and the initials of her name alone: many a melancholy day and watchful night succeeded the death of Ignatia; and the leaves of autumn were beginning to fall, ere I could re-assume my former avocations, my beloved instructress was silent: every pursuit appeared uninteresting and insipid. It was impossible to tune my harp; each note was discord to my ear: and the embroidery which we had began together remained unfinished, and the colours faded before I could prevail upon myself to add another leaf or shade, another flower: her favourite books became my only resource; and while I listened to their excellent precepts, or perused their pleasing narratives, I again met my friend in every line, and

her spirit hovered near me. It was almost two months after the death of Ignatia, when the lady prioress one morning informed me as I entered her apartment, that the arrival of Madame de St. Hilaire at the convent of St. Zuric was daily expected, to whose husband she was nearly related, and for whose acceptance she wished to prepare some of the choicest trinkets and pieces of work which our ingenuity and skill could supply: and selecting me as the principal artist on this occasion, recommended care and dispatch in the execution. In this occupation I was engaged the three following days. I was adding the last bead to a rosary when the prioress sent to require my attendance, and on entering the apartment I perceived a stranger, whom I immediately discovered to be Madam de St. Hilaire: she had lost the bloom of youth, but this was in some measure supplyed by

an engaging polished manner, fine features, and good teeth: she was eight and thirty; fair complexion, light hair, and dressed with elegance and skill. Madame de St. Hilaire was a woman of extreme delicacy of mind, and more suscepitble of painful impressions than accessible to those of a contrary description: ever active in discovering the unfavourable traits of character in those with whom she conversed, she frequently overlooked dispositions of a different nature; and as the soft Mimosa recoils from the touch of the passing stranger, so she retreated at the first indication of vice, folly, or rudeness; and formed by nature to charm and adorn society, she frequently passed days and months in seclusion, retiring disgusted from others, and too fastidious to be long pleased with her friends: her temper was mild and gentle, and, as I afterwards

experienced, it was impossible to reside under the same roof without being devotedly attached to her."

"The prioress introduced me as her protegé, and after a few obliging commendations as to my person and skill in embroidery, Madame de St. Hilaire inquired how I liked the convent of St. Zuric, and smiling, added that she concluded I was sorry that monastic vows were abolished."

I replied in the negative, at the same time doing every justice to the merits of the community in general, and to the kindness of the prioress in particular. She questioned me as to the extent of my knowledge in music, books, and drawing, and appeared pleased with what I said in reply, and henceforth I constantly attended her, sometimes with pieces of fancy work, at others with my music books,

and each day appeared to increase the interest which she had expressed in my favour at our first interview. She frequently mentioned her daughters, and wished they had a companion of their own age, who could promote their improvements in music and drawing; and concluded by asking me whether I should like to return to France with her!

No proposal could have been more agreeable to my wishes: change of scene might be supposed to remove the melancholy, and dispel the affliction which I felt for the death of Ignatia, and which the surrounding objects conspired to nourish and indulge. These sentiments I ventured to express to Madame de St. Hilaire, and soon afterwards I had a short conversation with the prioress, who signified to me her entire acquiescence with this wish.

of her relation, that I should quit the convent of St. Zuric, and accompany her to France.

When this intelligence was communicated to me, my heart again expanded to the influence of joy, and fancy dipping her pencil in bright colours, sketched a fairy prospect of generous friends, faithful lovers, and a prosperous fate. Madame de St. Hilaire having signified her intention of proceeding on her journey the following day, preparations were made for my departure also, but I determined previously to revisit the grave of Ignatia, and bid a last farewel to my friend. Accordingly I proceeded along the cloisters, and entered the burial ground as the last rays of light streamed through the parting clouds, and partially illumined the objects before me. I soon discovered the grave I sought, and kneeling down on the

sacred earth, remained long in prayer and mournful meditation. The evening breeze fluttered the branches of the cypress and Judas trees, which rose amidst the tombs, and strewed autumnal leaves over the lowly grave; the rustling of approaching footsteps withdrew my attention from the turf beneath which Ignatia reposed, and I beheld the confessor of the convent, Father Lomaria, standing near me.

"I judged rightly, my child," said he, "in concluding I should find you here, and came purposely to take leave of you, to bestow my blessing, and to wish you every prosperity. The lady who has taken you under her protection is worthy of the trust; but beware of her husband; I know him well; he is one of those men who scruple not to violate the most sacred duties, when they happen to interfere with the gratification of their pas-

sions. His family formerly patronized this community, but the man who at present possesses the wealth and honours of the family is rarely found to encourage laudable pursuits, or bestow any benefits upon the virtuous and deserving; but be not discouraged, my child; though dangers and difficulties may intercept your path, let it only make you tread more cautiously. Place your reliance on the protection of heaven, together with your own foresight, and may our patron St. Zuric be your guide."

The following morning at break of day Madame de St. Hilaire's attendants were in motion, and I met the prioress at the door of her own apartment; kindly taking me by the hand, she led me in, and presented me with a box, containing her own picture on the lid. "Accept of this, as a re-

membrance, my dear Giovanna," said she, "and as a memento of my affection; your attentive duty and gratitude has ensured to you my regard. I doubt not but that Madame de St. Hilaire will find you equally deserving of her affection. Farewel: do not forget your friends in the monastery of St. Zurlc, and rest assured that we shall remember you in our prayers."

It was in vain that I endeavoured to dispel the tears which rose to my eyes, or express the sensation which the unexampled goodness of the prioress had excited. I could only utter some inarticulate thanks for the kindness with which she had received me, and for the unremitting tenderness and benevolence she had displayed. Advancing towards the gate I was surrounded by nuns, each pressing upon me, together with their adieus, some trifling pre-

sent, when one of Madame de St. Hilaire's attendants came to accelerate my movements, by informing me that all was ready for our departure. I followed her, and seating myself in the carriage which waited at the gate, the muleteers drove off, and I lost sight of the convent of St. Zuric.

CHAP. V.

Oh! Happiness, our being's end and aim!
Good, pleasure, ease, content, whate'er thy name,
That something still which prompts the eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live, or dare to die;
Which, still so near us, yet beyond us lies,
O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool and wise:
Plant of celestial seed if dropt below,
Say in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?

POPE.

HIERES, on the coast of Provence, was the place of our destination. We continued travelling through the Milanese territory, and on the evening of the first day reached the town of Cosal, seated on the banks of the river Po. The mountains and fruitful vallies of Piedmont opened to our view

on the following day, and the road frequently lay through plantations of the orange and pomegranate trees. At length, after traversing a vast plain, we beheld the city of Turin, which stands at the foot of a mountain on the confluence of the river Po. We drove to one of the hotels, there to await the arrival of Monsieur de St. Hilaire, who on his return from Paris was to accompany us to his villa in Provence.

On the following morning we viewed the ramparts, which are of considerable extent, and enjoyed the beauties of some delicious gardens on the edge of the water. Having loitered there a considerable time, reposing in the shade, and selecting some flowers and fruit, we were proposing to regain the hotel, when a servant came to inform us that his master was arrived; we quickened our pace, and on our return

I retired to my apartment, till Madame de St. Hilaire should require my attendance. This was soon the case, and a gentleman in the military uniform rose at my entrance into the saloon, while Madame, in a graceful charming manner, endeavoured to engage his protection and esteem, by representing me as worthy of them. Ademar de St. Hilaire was about the middle height, rather thin than otherwise, distinguished by his sallow complexion, long face, and dark blue prominent eyes; his upper lip remarkably short, was rendered more so by an habitual smile, while the general expression of his countenance indicated coldness and pride; his manners were imperious, and often rude. Ardent and undaunted in the pursuit of interest, or of pleasure, all perception as to the distinguishing characteristics of virtue and of vice was nearly extinguished in

his bosom; and as far as was consistent with his own immediate personal safety, his passions were his only guide. Strange are the inconsistencies of the human mind; ever varying are the sentiments of the heart, and vain for the most part, and imperfect must be the endeavours of the biographer, to depict that which changes its colour as the clouds of the sky, and is unsteady as the sands on the sea shore. De St. Hilaire was a negligent unfaithful husband; his heart cold and depraved, yet his temper, without exception, the best I ever met with, and he was an affectionate father and indulgent master. Of noble origin, and a native of Languedoc, in the south of France; before the revolution he held the rank of lieutenant in the Legion of Honour, and in 1789 took the oaths, and was advanced to the rank of colonel: he was generally esteemed artful and intriguing, and at

the time I saw him was forty years of age. He commanded a division in the Emperor Napoleon's army, and when absent from his military duties resided at Albinga, his favourite villa on the coast of the Mediterranean, five miles to the south of Toulon. The presence of a stranger usually occasions a degree of restraint in domestic circles, but I had soon occasion to observe that my entrance had not interrupted any overflowings of tenderness, or exchange of confidence and endearment. After giving some directions about our journey, ordering his attendants to be ready at an early hour, and inquiring in a careless manner respecting those domestic transactions which had taken place during his absence, he left us, and I saw him no more that night. As we were to continue our journey on the following morning, we retired early to rest, and at day-break, leaving Turin

to the right, after travelling several hours, crossed the Alps, and entered Provence.

The beauties of Languedoc are so justly celebrated, and have been so frequently described, that it appears needless to remark how majestically the mountains rise, and how luxuriantly the vallies extend, adorned with trees of every foliage, and plants of every description. The scarlet blossoms of the pomegranate were intermingled with the white flowers of the orange and citron plant, and their light-green leaves, of a spiral form, were contrasted with the dusky tufts of the olive, and grotesque form of the cork-tree: the wild vine mixed its slender tendrils with those of the scarlet fuscia, and we frequently paused to enjoy the fragrance of the honeysuckle, and to catch the last beams of light quivering on the foliage of the trees, or trem-

bling on the surface of the stream; and we listened to the simple song of the shepherd watching his flock, and guarding them from the depredations of the wolves, tenants of the neighbouring forest: the pastures were spotted with herds, and the corn, beginning to ripen, waved its golden head.

The road now lay along the shore, and we soon discerned the clear surface of the Mediterranean; and continuing our route, on the evening of the third day we discovered the town of Hieres; and de St. Hilaire pointed out to me his villa, seated on a rising ground, at the foot of which the ever toiling ocean rolled. The building fronted the sea, and the fairy islands of Hieres, clothed with eternal verdure, appeared in the distance raising their green heads above the waves: a spacious antichamber, adorned with statues of exquisite workmanship, led to a dining-room, the

painted walls of which represented in a lively manner scenes taken from the popular romances of the day: on the opposite side stood the library, containing a multitude of books enclosed in cases of inlaid wood, and covered with gold net-work: a marble staircase led to the apartments above, consisting of a magnificent saloon, with several smaller rooms branching from it: the walls were covered with silk hangings edged with gold and mirrors, placed opposite the windows, reflected the light barks and pleasure-boats, which glided on the surface of the waters; while the surges, as they rose and retreated, could be distinctly heard in every part of the building: cages of gold wire detained a variety of curious birds, and baskets of flowering shrubs were placed near them: the pleasure-grounds spread along the sea side, and the myrtles and gerraneums took root among the rocks:

a pavilion, placed at the extremity of the garden, contained several musical instruments, and the breeze fluttered the strings of its own harp, and drew forth such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine—"Ah me! what hand can touch the strings so fine!"

The villa of Albinga appeared to be the work of some Genii, who had at his command the beauties of nature and of art. Immediately after our arrival three lovely girls ran to meet their parents, who alternately pressed them to their hearts with all the warmth of paternal love. Angelica, Pamela, and Victoire de St. Hilaire had reached that interesting age, when the innocent attractions of childhood begin to give way to the more decided charms of youth—equally gifted by nature with beauty of form and feature, their dispositions appeared similar, and indicated good-humour and frankness; fu-

ture events will develope this fully, and also display those shades which sometimes obscured their characters: I shall only remark at present, that Angelica the eldest, engaged my attention, in preference to her sisters, from the moment in which I first saw her, and long retained a pre-eminence in my affections. She was almost fifteen; her person small and well turned; her face round, and nose of the Grecian cast; and she had large dark eyes, which brightened her whole countenance, and almost dazzled the beholder. I never saw any so beautiful or so expressive; and whether they melted with tenderness, or sparkled with resentment, they were equally objects of admiration: long silken, jet-black hair was fastened in folds round her pretty head, and the shape and attitude of her hands and arms, raised to adjust it, displayed the beauty of the Graces;

white muslin robe without spot or blemish, resembling her own innocence, heightened those attractions it appeared to conceal; and I never beheld so interesting a creature as Angelica de St. Hilaire at the age of fifteen. Her sisters, Pamela and Victoire, fair blooming girls, with light hair and blue eyes, had not as yet any decided character of countenance or turn of feature; their ages thirteen and fourteen. We soon became acquainted, and the morning after my arrival Angelica lightly rapped at my room-door, to invite me to walk; and putting into my hand a few flowers, which she had that moment gathered, we took our way, arm in arm, towards the sea side; but had not proceeded far when a person met us, whose appearance attracted my attention in a remarkable manner; it was one of those figures which excite disagreeable sensations, and recal to

the mind unpleasing images, without a possibility of tracing them to their source: tall, thin, and athletic, his features were rugged and ill-shaped, his eye-brows black and bushy, half concealed an eye restless and disturbed, usually withdrawing itself from observation; but when fixed on any object, it was stern and sure, and the eye shrunk from its gaze: his step was firm, but he bent lowly as we approached, and Angelica having made some slight notice of him, he passed onwards to the house. I immediately inquired who this person was; and found that he was M. de St. Hilaire's favourite attendant, La Souche; but the unaccountable aversion which arose in my mind, while I surveyed the form and features of this man, can no otherwise be accounted for, than by supposing the soul endowed with a degree

of prescience, which would give us intimation of approaching danger.

Invited by the beauty of the morning, we continued our walk farther than we at first intended; and on our return, Madame expressed some displeasure against her daughter, for having walked so far without an attendant, desiring us in future to avoid it; when our attention was suddenly directed to a small bark cutting its way through the transparent surface of the sea: the sun glittered upon the oars, and spangled the light foam of the wave as it turned its rudder, and made for land at the foot of the lawn on which the villa stood, and a young man leaping on shore advanced towards us: de St. Hilaire hastily rising, exclaimed—"Ah! that is our friend Henry de Verneuil. I was ignorant of his arrival in Provence," and

immediately went to embrace him; and they soon afterwards returned together.

De Verneuil was tall and thin, slightly marked with the small-pox; his eyes dark, and expressive of sense and intelligence, teeth good, and face a perfect oval; his manners were soft and easy, without being careless, and his conversation agreeable and well expressed: his family was one of those few among the ancient nobility of France who early joined the republican armies; and his father, the Viscount de Verneuil, fell at the siege of Acre, fighting by the Emperor Napoleon's side, who graciously extended his patronage to the son, and confirmed to him his father's possessions, and admitted him into the 17th demi brigade. His mother, Madame de Verneuil, was a woman of distinguished merit, and had for many years been united in

ties of friendship with Madame de St. Hilaire. She usually resided at Belle-Isle, within a few miles of Albinga, but at the period I mention was absent, either at Paris or Lyons, I forget which. I attended Madame and her daughters while they pursued their usual morning occupations. Angelica shewed a decided talent for painting, and excelled in taking views and colouring landscapes; while Pamela made music her study, and touched the harp with delicacy and skill; but Victoire, the youngest, delighted in reading plays, poetry, and romances; and frequently succeeded in expressing her thoughts in verse. When our studies were ended, we dispersed with joyous alacrity, and with light step traversed the gardens and pleasure-grounds, till the dinner bell summoned us to the saloon; and at our entrance, M. de St. Hilaire smiled, and making

room for Angelica near himself, placed me on the other side, and desiring de Verneuil to sit by me, we seated ourselves at table. We soon entered into conversation, and I found that he had travelled a great deal, and had resided several months at Florence. He spoke of music and painting scientifically, but without affectation, and observed that the Italian ladies, who commonly excel in these accomplishments, were nevertheless formed to captivate the eye, without interesting the heart; their want of information rendering them deficient in those qualities requisite for rendering them agreeable companions or estimable friends; nor was he more inclined to favour his fair countrywomen. "The attractions of wit and talent," continued he, "become powerless, if intruded upon our observation; and when the restraints of modesty are disregarded, personal ad-

vantages lose all their charms." It was not difficult to prevail upon de Verneuil to remain several days at Albinga. Angelica consented to display the contents of her port-folio; he was permitted to accompany us in our excursions, and to carry her pencils and drawing implements when we went to take views: we sometimes wandered a considerable way, traversing the orange-groves, and when fatigued, we reclined, at our ease, on the soft turf. Angelica sketched the passing objects, while de Verneuil read aloud some entertaining romance.

The season of autumn was passing away, when it was proposed that we should visit the island of Hieres, and accordingly a pleasure-boat was prepared, and on the following morning M. and Madame de St. Hilaire, their three daughters, de Verneuil, and I, attended by servants, em-

barked at break of day. The sun rising in mild grandeur, threw a path of radience across the waves; and the balmy fragrance of the morning air, scented with the orange blossom, hailed our approach to the Island of Hieres: we landed, and entering a wilderness of sweets and shade, pitched our tent among the blooming trees, which nearly overspread the gently rising surface of these lovely islands. The freshness of the air had exhilirated our spirits, and excited mirth and hilarity. De St. Hilaire echoed the innocent jest and artless merriment of his daughters; and de Verneuil, mild, gentle and pleasing, thought only how he could promote the happiness of those around him, while Madame gazed at her daughters with rapture, and beheld her husband with complacency. We remained in the shade till towards evening; when the attendants, stationed at a distance, played seve-

ral favourite airs. After having hearkened to the soft cadences of the flute and hautboy, and admired the simple note of the French horn returning in the breeze, walking was proposed. Accompanied by Angelica, followed by her father and de Verneuil, we reached some fields of pasture near a mile distant from the tent. Pamela had remained behind, attentive to the music, and Victoire sat reading to her mother in the tent: in the mean time we were crossing a field, when we perceived a bull breaking its way through a hedge, and advancing rapidly towards us in no very favourable disposition: regardless of her father's entreaties to the contrary, Angelica flew along the ground, and in her fright directly crossed before the enraged animal, who instantly made at her: her father and de Verneuil ran to her assistance, endeavouring with loud cries, and by throwing

stones, to drive him off; one of them hitting him between his eyes, he turned round and ran towards me. I was not far from the hedge, and desperately forcing my steps through it, plunged into the thickest part of the wood, pursuing my way in defiance of every obstacle, till overcome by fatigue, my clothes torn, my hands and arms bleeding, I threw myself down among some brushwood, and it was long ere I could recover my breath. The shades of evening began to fall when I heard de St. Hilaire's voice, who soon reached the place where I was sitting: he was breathless, and agitated, and expressed his joy at my safety in a vehement incoherent manner, without attending to my inquiries about his daughter; grasping one of my hands in both his.

"You know not how cruelly I have suffered," continued he, "on your account, dearest Giovanna. The

furious animal pursued your steps through the wood, and some peasants at length securing him in an adjoining field, his horns were observed to be covered with blood. Imagine if possible my agony when all endeavours to discover you proved fruitless; but your lovely arms are torn, and bleeding: rest upon me, dearest creature, and let me conduct you to your friends." Annoyed and displeased at the vehemence of his looks and warmth of his expressions, I declined accepting his arm, and reluctantly admitted his assistance in pushing back the spreading branches, and disentangling my robe from the briars and thorns which obstructed my path, as I endeavoured hastily to retreat from the shade and solitude of the wood. de Verneuil saw us emerging from the trees, and starting forward joyfully congratulated me on my safety, and passing

my arm through his, I suffered him to conduct me, and soon afterwards entered the tent with a disordered dress, garments torn, and spirits agitated. The girls flew to meet me, and Angelica throwing her arms round my neck, almost wept for joy at my safety: and I listened with vexation and confusion, while de Verneuil rallied his friend on having left him behind, and gone alone in pursuit of me. de St. Hilaire on his side appeared pre-occupied, and we soon afterwards embarked, and like most gratifications of a similar nature, the hilarity of the morning was exchanged for lassitude, weariness and dejection: we reached Albinga at a late hour.

CHAP. VI.

"Il n'y a point de deguisement qui puisse long tems cacher l'amour on il est; ni le feindre ou il n'est pas."

De Verneuil seldom permitted a day to glide by unmarked by some testimony of his attention, or expression of his regard: he was foremost to greet my appearance in the morning, and the last to wish me agreeable repose at night; as we traversed the fields together, he selected for me the fairest flowers, and when we entered the orange and citron groves, he presented me with the most delicious fruits. Sometimes I was entertained with an account of the manners and customs of foreign nations, and he gave me a collection of the most remarkable

views which he had drawn while he traversed them. I received his attentions with the sincerest gratitude, but my heart remained insensible to a warmer passion: my thoughts were painfully occupied by the assiduity of de St. Hilaire, who took every opportunity of disclosing sentiments, which on my side both duty and inclination sternly opposed. I was one day crossing the antichamber, when his attendant La Souche hastily advancing put a letter into my hand, and instantly disappeared. Ignorant as to the hand-writing of the superscription, I opened it, and found it contained violent professions of love, and splendid offers of protection, but without any signature: I was at no loss however to guess from whence it came. Irritated and confused, I was in the act of destroying it, when de Verneuil advanced to meet me. Hastily concealing the fragments in my robe, I acceded

to his request, that I would walk with him a few moments on the sea shore, and enjoy the beauties of the evening: we accordingly descended upon the beach. Those who have visited the southern parts of Europe will recollect the charms of the evening hour, when the clearness of the atmosphere discloses every aperture in the rocks, marks each swell of the mountain, and displays the variegated foliage of the forest; and when the sun, setting in a flood of glory, gives place to the fair planet of the night, the landscape is again reflected with softened tints from the still lake and peaceful ocean. We walked silently on; no sound broke the stillness of the scene, except the rippling of the tide: soft sweet swelling sounds marked its rise and fall over the loose pebbles of the shore. My thoughts were painfully occupied by the contents of the letter which I had received, and

the recollection of the forlorn situation in which I stood; not a friend to whom I could confide my uneasiness, or from whose experience I might receive advice, and I thought of Ignatia without being able to suppress a deep sigh: de Verneuil paused, and looking attentively at me, said:—

"I have long wished for an opportunity of inquiring into the cause of that dejection so visible in every look and motion: confide your sorrow to my bosom Giovanna, most beloved of women, and you will find that I possess a heart glowing with ardent affection. From the first moment I became acquainted with your character I discovered the object of my wishes, which I had despaired of ever finding; educated by a parent, herself the model of excellence, she early raised my ideas of the female character to a standard exalted as her own, free from the slight-

est predilection towards any individual of her sex, and possessed of a splendid fortune. I early sought to fix my choice among the gayest of the Parisian and fairest of the Italian ladies, but disgusted with the artifice and forward attractions of the one, and fatigued by the insipidity and ignorance of the others, my affections have hitherto remained disengaged; your tenderness of heart, frankness of disposition, and excellence of understanding, have won my heart, which would have remained cold and insensible to the mere attractions of beauty, or the fascinations of wit. The happiness of my future days rests with yourself, and is at your disposal; speek then, lovely woman, tell me whether I may hope ever to be blest, or do you, my Giovanna, mourn some absent and beloved friend, who has engaged those affections which I would risk my life to obtain?"

How could I reply to a declaration of love so full of delicacy and tenderness, without wounding the feelings of this generous man, or encouraging hopes which my heart did not sanction? I thanked him warmly for his expressions of regard, and endeavoured to be equally sincere. I said, that though impressed with the deepest sense of his excellent qualities, my sentiments were merely those of friendship, nor could I possibly promise that these would ever change their character in conformity to his wishes; that he was, however, mistaken in supposing that I mourned any absent object, or had even yet felt a more lively esteem than what I experienced in his favour, but at the same time I sincerely wished him every happiness with some more fortunate woman, adorned with those qualities which his partiality had bestowed upon me, and gifted with rank and

fortune suitable to his own, and from whom I should rejoice to receive the name of friend. I added, that destitute of parents and connexions, perhaps I might shortly be obliged to quit that family which at present protected me, and wander alone disregarded and forlorn.

As I spoke these words, my voice failed me, and tears fell from my eyes, while de Verneuil entreated, in broken accents, that I would relate some of the occurrences of my early life: he had vaguely heard that Madame de St. Hilaire had discovered me in a convent in Switzerland, but was entirely ignorant of every other circumstance respecting me. I was proceeding to comply with his request, when we were interrupted by de St. Hilaire, who approached us in a formal manner, and smiling: "I must apologize for my intrusion," said he: "I

have no doubt put to flight some very sentimental interesting conversation, but may I be permitted to remark that the night air is very prejudicial to ladies, and that the family are assembled in the supper room; but apropos," continued he, addressing himself to de Verneuil, "I have this moment received orders to join, but am entirely at a loss to account for this sudden recal. My family are to follow me to Paris the beginning of winter, and I suppose you will be soon upon the move as well as myself, in which case we can travel together."

They continued discoursing on military affairs till we reached Albinga, and entering the supper room, found the family already seated at table, when Angelica, taking a letter from a small bag which hung across her arm, handed it over to me, saying, "Here is some-

thing for you, my dear Giovanna: I found it this evening on the gravel walk, as I crossed it in search of you and de Verneuil."

I blushed deeply, and still more so, when I met the eye of de Verneuil as he rose his from the superscription of the letter, which was de St. Hilaire's, who immediately turned the conversation, and talked of his intended departure. The recollection that he, at least, was going away, gave me so much satisfaction, that I was enabled to rally and display some degree of ease and composure: de St. Hilaire was to set out for Paris the end of the following week, accompanied by de Verneuil, who had also received orders to join his regiment.

On the evening previous to their departure I was alone in the music room, looking over some books of music, when *La Chanson des Vaches*, so

frequently heard in the mountains of Switzerland, caught my view. I touched a few chords, and the simple melody of the air recalled a thousand recollections connected with my dear Ignatia, who was seldom absent from my thoughts. I paused, and withdrawing my fingers from the trembling strings of the harp, reclined against it. Memory recalled to my recollection her tender affection, and fancy painted afresh the hour of her death. I wept, and absorbed in my own painful reflections, remained for a few moments unconscious of the presence of de Verneuil, who was at my feet in an instant. "Can you pardon me, Giovanna," said he, "for intruding myself upon your retirement, when you appear studiously to avoid me; but accident brought me to this spot, and I was on the point of retiring, when, seeing your tears, I was no longer able to resist the emo-

tion, which conducted me to your feet; but," continued he, rising, "I will no longer annoy you by my presence. Farewel, and may every happiness attend you."

"You are mistaken, de Verneuil," replied I, "when you think I shunned you: on the contrary, I am pleased at this opportunity of wishing you every happiness, and an agreeable journey to Paris."

"Happiness can never attend me, independent of you, my Giovanna," added he, with emotion; "and oh! that I could but flatter myself with the delightful hope that your thoughts will sometimes follow me, and that my affection and devotedness may ever meet with a return."

Finding that I would neither promise this, nor consent to receive his letters, nor write to him during his absence, he left me in displeasure;

but quickly returning, with gentle warmth bade me farewel. "And may the man," continued he, "for whom you reserve your affections, receive the invaluable gift with unbounded tenderness and gratitude!" So saying, he turned away, and as I declined appearing again that evening, I saw him no more for the present. Though I was insensible to a warmer sentiment towards de Verneuil than friendship, yet for some days after his departure every thing went on heavily. Madame remained almost entirely in her own apartment, and we rarely saw her, except at the hour of repast. Angelica and her sisters engaged all my attention, and each hour encreased the affection I felt for these charming young women.

The month of December rapidly approached, and that season, so cheerless in a northern climate, had not as

yet disrobed the garden of a flower, or changed the colour of a single leaf, and apples of gold appeared among the blossoms of the orange trees. Towards the latter end of the month the rain falling copiously, accompanied by equinoxial gales, prevented our walking out of doors; we therefore paced with jocund step the spacious antichamber which fronted the sea, amusing ourselves in tracing the progress of the billows, which chased each other boisterously to the shore; and we frequently paused awhile to catch the distant sound of Neptune's white flocks, which low'd above the waves. The evenings were chilly, and we usually assembled in the library, where the cheerful faggot blazed on the hearth.

The fifteenth of December, 1808, ten days previous to our departure for Paris, was more tempestuous than I ever remember. The dark surface of

the sea was covered with foam; the howling wind furiously drove the surges high in air, and flights of sea birds fluttered at the windows, and with screams seemed to demand admittance and shelter. The fishermen were employed, some in drawing up their barks far upon the beach, while others stood looking at the sea, and prognosticating a continuance of the gale. The wind, however, was hushed on the following morning, but the sea continued agitated and noisy, tumbling its foaming waves in wild disorder on the shore.

Desirous of taking a nearer view of it, we descended upon the beach, and found it strewed with branches of trees, pieces of timber, and fragments of various descriptions, half covered with sand. Madame expressed her anxiety as to the fate of those mariners who were exposed the preceding night to the fury of the gale, and remarked her

satisfaction that Madame de Liancourt, her particular friend, who usually resided at Hieres, was at Toulouse, adding that she had an only child, a midshipman, on board Admiral de Berthier's squadron, cruising in the Mediterranean; "And," continued she, "whenever my friend hears the tempest howl, and sees the sea in motion, she finds it impossible to sleep, and continues all night in fearful agitation, thinking of her son, and fancying, as the wind sweeps by, that it is mingled with the cries of sinking mariners."

Madame had scarcely done speaking, when we perceived a group of sailors advancing towards us. We stopped to inquire how they had fared in the late gale. A fine youth, about fifteen, in a blue jacket and short trowsers, smiled archly, and said, "Ah! madame, I see you have forgotten your friend, Etienne de Liancourt."

"Mon dieu," exclaimed she, embracing him, "where do you come from? Your father and mother are at Toulouse—you have not been shipwrecked, I hope."

"Indeed, but I have," replied the boy: "our ship foundered last night—our crew is safe—we all contrived some way or another to get to land, and I was making the best of my way home."

"You shall stay with me at Albinga," replied madame, "while I write to your father and mother;" and we returned there together.

The young midshipman was one of the finest boys I ever knew, and possessed an excellent heart: he was passionately fond of his mother, and the next thing he liked best in the world was his profession. Madame de Liancourt left Toulouse, and travelled to Albinga without stopping, when she heard of

her son's disaster. The maternal tenderness which she shewed on meeting him, who flew into his mother's arms with rapture, immediately interested me in her favour, and when I became better acquainted with her character, I found all this favourable impression confirmed. She was a lively little woman, always cheerful and good-humoured; her mind perfectly sound, and not in the least assailed by imaginary evils, more difficult to bear than real grievances: her benevolence was the result of constitutional suavity, not the effect of sentiment, and therefore it was uniformly and judiciously exhibited. Nature never intended her for an heroine, but formed her for what is much more valuable—a steady judicious friend, and a careful and affectionate wife and mother. Her husband held a lucrative place in the civil department at Hieres, and was much

older than herself. After a few days Madame de Liancourt and her son took leave of us, and many affectionate expressions of regard on both sides attended our adieus. She engaged me to correspond with her; and the young midshipman declared that when he got a ship, it should be called La Belle Giovanna.

In a few days after their departure, letters arrived from Paris, signifying that every thing was ready for our reception there, and that La Souche was to set off the following day to meet us half way, and escort us to Paris. Accordingly we left Provence on the second of January, 1809, and proceeded by easy journeys, which were not distinguished by any remarkable incident, and on the sixth day reached St. Dennis, and entered the lofty avenues of Elm, which distinguish the approach, and reach as far as the suburbs of Paris.

CHAP. VII.

"On n'aime bien qu'une seule fois: c'est la premiere."

We drove to an hotel in the Faux-bourgh St. Antoine, where a numerous retinue of servants waited our arrival; and ushered us into a magnificent suit of apartments, consisting of antichambers, with drawing-rooms, &c. where every object denoted taste and splendor: the saloon was hung with crimsond amask, and lamps, placed under globes of coloured glass, gave a soft and pleasing light. After taking coffee we retired to adjust our dress, and having talked over the occurrences of the day, expatiated on the happiness of being in Paris, and anticipated a

variety of amusements. I returned with Angelica and her sisters into the saloon, and there we found two genteel looking young men, who, rising at our entrance, congratulated us on our arrival in Paris. The door soon afterwards opened, and de St. Hilaire came forward and embraced his daughters; saluted me with cordiality, and introduced his two friends, Rimini and de Linois.

The character of Rimini, and truth bending over me, guides my hand while I sketch it, and pourtray his demeanor; was mild and gentle with the timid, haughty and reserved with the arrogant and proud; frank and good humoured with the well bred; he could admirably adapt his behaviour on all occasions to existing circumstances, and possessed an intuitive sense of what was most eligible to be done and said on every occasion; and generosity, tender-

ness, and truth, directed every emotion of his heart: possessed of judgment to combine and taste to select images apparently the most dissimilar: his conversation was brilliant, and his thoughts were expressed with elegance and refinement: it was impossible to listen to him without feeling an unusual flow of ideas rise in the mind, while *engourdissement* and lassitude fled before him: his person, rather below the middle size, was eminently graceful and well turned; while every trait of countenance and line of feature indicated sense and intelligence, and when he spoke, the tones of his voice fell "soft as the fleeces of descending snows; melting they fall and sink into the heart."

Francois Paul De Rimini, three and thirty years of age, was the youngest of three brothers, descended from the ancient sovereigns of that name in Romagna, in Italy: his eldest brother,

the late Marquis, perished prematurely in Switzerland several years ago, and his infant daughter shared the same fate; the present marquis, a very eccentric character, had retired from all public affairs, and resided at his ancient Castle of Marino, seated on the Adriatic shore. The Rimini family were among those who joined the victorious army of the emperor Napoleon, and consequently retained their wealth and honours. Rimini was distinguished by royal favour, and promoted to the rank of commander of a division in the second regiment of guards, at that time stationed at Paris.

It is not very easy to express precisely the character of de Linois, which nature had traced with a feeble unsteady hand: presenting few strong traits of feature to mark the resemblance: the only sentiment which appeared very decided was a sincere admiration of his

own person, which, to say the truth, was extremely pretty: meek blue eyes and beautiful shining brown hair, nicely arranged in curls, shaded a forehead of alabaster, added to the attractions of a fine set of features, and a form, which though small, was very good: his manners were polished, but his deportment and conversation for the most part silly, empty, and vain; he was seldom observed to distinguish any of the fair sex by a marked preference, except with a view of mortifying a rival or wounding the feelings of some woman present, who really liked him, or whom his vanity had represented as a conquest to his charms: and this trait of disposition, insignificant as it may appear, gave rise as will be seen presently to some circumstances of a very disastrous nature.

De Linois, however, was not illnatured; but restless wishes, wavering resolves, and erroneous judgment, the

natural result of a weak mind, are as frequently detrimental to the welfare of others; while his attentive duty to his relatives, and invariable silence, whenever the ill nature of his companions gave him an opportunity of retailing scandalous anecdotes or echoing the sarcastic jest, evidently shewed him by no means a stranger to the more estimable qualities of the heart; but each trait of disposition was faint, and eternally subject to variation, excepting one; *vanity*.

The de Linois family was of ancient date, in the south of France: and he had long been patronized by Monsieur Talleyrand, and was advanced to the command of a detachment in the Legion of Honour: he was nine and twenty years of age. Several succeeding mornings after our arrival in Paris were engaged in viewing the public buildings; we admired the various and

exquisite pieces of sculpture and paintings in the Hotel de la Louvre, and the four supurb bronze horses in La Place de Carousal: we traversed the walks of the Thuilleries, admired its extent and breadth, and returned to the hotel at a late hour. At nine o'clock in the evening the carriages again drew up to take us to the Theatre de la Republic, and escorted by Rimini and de Linois I followed Madame, accompanied by her daughters, and we entered the house a short time after the opera was begun. My attention was for some moments wholly occupied by the magnificence of the decorations and beauty of the scenery: the sparkling diamond, the ruddy ruby, the green emerald, shone on all sides in brilliant profusion, adorning the graceful head and shewy form of the Parisian ladies: the dark coats and rough undressed appearance of the

gentlemen formed an admirable contrast to them, and heightened the interest of the *coup d'œil;* and when the dancing commenced my eyes were rivitted to the step; the grace displayed in the ballet and machinery, moving as if inspired by magic, resembled the fleeting imagery of a dream, rather than any substantial representation. De St. Hilaire joined us, and soon afterwards drew our attention to the opposite side of the house, where the Emperor Napoleon sat in a balcony box, surrounded by several general officers; and he occasionally spoke to those who were accustomed to receive that honour: the distance was too great for me clearly to distinguish his countenance or deportment: I had that advantage a few evenings afterwards on another occasion, therefore I turned my eyes to a lady who sat near us: a half helmet of precious stones adorned her

head, and several shining ringlets of black hair shaded part of her forehead, and fell in loose curls over her left ear: her dress displayed to advantage every beauty of form: superb diamond bracelets confined the full sleeve considerably above the elbow, and chains of diamonds sparkled on her bosom: every art had been called in aid to heighten her attractions, which it was impossible to view without admiration: a gentleman in the military uniform, apparently about fifty, sat near her.

"That lady's history," said Rimini, who sat at my right hand, "is rather singular: originally a nun, in one of the monasteries at Genoa; when our armies lay there in the year 1800, some soldiers set fire to her convent: she with difficulty escaped the flames, which singed her garments, and scorched her hands and arms. Distracted and bewil-

dered, she fled, not knowing whither: a serjeant met her, and she was conducted to the general's quarters, under whose protection she long remained: he afterwards married her, and she contrives to unite the sentiments of religion and gallantry in an eminent degree: she intermingles the hair of her lovers with the relics of her patron saint; kneels at the Holy Virgin's shrine, and turning, smiles to her favourite friend, whom she has appointed to meet her there: her letters, which excite the admiration of the fair, and frequently extort a smile from the men, are distinguished by the most extraordinary medley of love and devotion. In regard to the general whom you see sitting by her side, ambition is merely a secondary passion in his breast: love of money and devotion to the beautiful sex claims the percedence. In landed property he has expended several mil-

lions of livres, and his lady's diamonds are valued at eight millions. Turn your eyes to the opposite side of the house, and you will see a man in a dark coloured coat, who has this moment entered the next box but one to that in which the emperor is seated, and who fixes his eyes intently on the stage, penetration and genius appearing through the lowering clouds of a very forbidding aspect: he is a celebrated painter, whose ardent pursuit of science or sanguinary disposition, induces him eagerly to court scenes of blood; and view with steady eye, and trace with untrembling hand, the last agonies of expiring nature, or still more distracting sight, a wretched female embracing for the last time an only child, or idolized husband, whom the executioner is preparing to drag away from her arms for ever. Some of his paintings certainly do him consi-

derable honour, and his talents are such as to place his name among those of Titien and Apelles; but speaking of him as a man it cannot be otherwise than with sentiments of detestation and abhorrence.

"The lady who sits in the stage box is the widow of General Lasnes, who was slain some months ago in an engagement with the Russians. When ambassador at the court of Portugal; the Prince Regent stood sponsor for the child whom you see sitting on her lap, and whose innocent expressions of joy, and eager attention to the movements of the dancers, appear to engage all the mother's thoughts.

"Madame de Lasnes is an amiable accomplished woman, lovely in her person, and pleasing in her manner; naturally of a compassionate, gentle disposition: prosperity does not harden her heart, or render her insensible to

the miseries of the poor. She educates and maintains several orphan children and indigent widows, and has restored to the divorced wife and deserted child of her husband, most of the property of which they had been unjustly deprived. She leads a retired life, seldom appearing in public.

"The gentleman to whom his Majesty the Emperor is at present speaking, is General Massena. During the campaign in 1795, he commanded the right wing of the army in Italy, where he distinguished himself by activity and valour: he afterwards defeated a division of the imperial troops, and seized the artillery and baggage belonging to the Austrian army: he was next sent to negociate a peace at Vienna, and was received in the capital with every demonstration of joy, pomp, and magnificence. The command of the Roman territory was afterwards

assigned to him, and he levied numerous contributions on the clergy, the Pope, and his two nephews, the Cardinals York and Albani. Soon after his return to Paris, from some unknown cause, he incurred the displeasure of the Emperor, and therefore seldom appeared at court: this did not, however, prevent him from purchasing an estate within a mile of Malmasion, on which he chiefly resided: however, lately, he has been distinguished by royal favour, and it is said will shortly set out again upon some military expedition: he is forty-seven years of age, remarkable for strength of constitution and capability of enduring much bodily fatigue, and possesses a strong, active, and intelligent mind, and is endued with great personal courage; but want of feeling, and extreme covetousness, obscure and tarnish all his better qualities. Raise your eyes to the second tier over the

Emperor's box; the beautiful girl, who is selecting some oranges from a basket presented to her by a gentleman in black, is the senator Garat's natural daughter; he idolizes her, and has lavished treasures upon her education and establishment: her mother, formerly mistress to the Duke de Polignac, became, at the Revolution, the property of Garat; whose protection, however, she left after the birth of her daughter, and endeavoured to excuse her inconstancy and profligacy, by uttering the most false and infamous accusations against him who had rescued her from extreme indigence, and at the general massacre in 1793, saved her life. The senator Garat did not desert his infant daughter, but placed her under the care of a female relation, who happened to be a worthy, sensible woman. To the beauty of her person were added other more valuable acquisitions; and

the father, proud of the charms, and gratified by the affection of his daughter, openly acknowledges his intention of making her his heir, and of giving her a portion of twenty thousand livres sterling: a day is said to be fixed for her marriage with her cousin, the young man who is sitting near her.

"The person whom you see standing under the chandelier, in the box fronting the stage, is Monsieur de Volney, author of the 'Ruins, or Meditations on the Ruins of Empires,' in which he attacks so freely the Christian religion. In 1802, he incurred the displeasure of the Emperor, by opposing his majesty's concordat for the restoration of the true worship; since which period his influence has been on the decline, and little is heard or said about him; he still, sometimes, however, writes bitter philippics against religion in general, and the clergy in

particular, which nobody thinks it worth their while to contradict, or to attend to. Few have experienced vicissitudes of a more extraordinary nature than the lady to whom he is at this instant speaking, and offering his snuff-box.

"Marian de Clery, born of reputable parents, in Dauphiné, was early placed in the service of the late Queen of France: her brother attended the king to the scaffold, and gave to the public an artless, interesting account of the royal sufferers. Marian, when young, was extremely beautiful, and the gentleness and attentive obedience of her disposition so endeared her to her royal mistress, that she always accompanied her in those frequent and imprudent walks, and private parties, at Trainon, in which the unhappy Antoinette too freely indulged; Marian, consequently, attracted the attention of

the mob, and in August, 1792, when the royal family at Versailles was surrounded by a frantic populace, threatening death and destruction to them and their adherents, Marian was separated from her mistress, dragged to Paris by a troop of furious half-intoxicated poissards, who insulted her with every abuse and violence which their ferocious souls could suggest: wounded, covered with mud, and half dead with terror, she was thrown into a common prison, and condemned to hear the groans of the unfortunate, interrupted only by the oaths and execrations of their brutal jailors; one of them, however, a native of Dauphiné, recognized Marian; he remembered her as a girl in his native village; pity revived in his savage bosom, at the recollection of former scenes, and he let her go. She wandered day and night in the suburbs of Paris, desolate and

forlorn, without food or shelter, and was on the point of throwing herself into the river Seine, which she approached for the purpose, when a boatman hailed her, and offered to conduct her, gratis, wherever she pleased. She was set down at a mill by the river side, some distance from Paris, where she willingly undertook to serve in the capacity of a menial servant. It was some months before she could obtain any information respecting her relations. Some were wanderers, like herself; others had fallen by the sword, in defending their property: her paternal dwelling was pillaged and burnt; the land had passed into other hands; she remained, therefore, with the miller's wife, whose sons had joined the republican party. Three years after this period, Monsieur Raderer, Chancellor of the Parliament at Nantz, chanced to see and to be struck with her beau-

ty; he married her, and now she enjoys the affluence and happiness she so well deserves."

Soon after Rimini had ended his account of the interesting Marian de Clery, the opera was concluded, and the emperor's intention of retiring signified to his guards, he advanced gracefully to the front of the box, and bowing three times to the audience, retired amidst a thunder of applause.

CHAP. VIII.

Felice età dell oro,
Bella innocenza antica
Quando al piacer nemica
Non era la Virtù!
Dal Fasto, e dal decoro
Noi ci troviamo oppressi
E ci formiam noi Stessi
La nostra servitù.

METASTASIO.

THE conversation of my friend and companion Ignatia, in the Monastery of St. Zuric, added to the perusal of those authors, whose interesting narratives so frequently charmed my solitude in the mountains of St. Bernardine, had essentially contributed to mislead my judgment, and by exalting my imagination, exposed me to the pain of disappointment. I expected to recognize those sentiments of tenderness,

and exclusive devotion to the fair sex, which had been so frequently described to me; not a single vestige of which could be discerned in the Parisian scenes which were opening to my view. The demeanor of the gentlemen was uniformly cold, indifferent, and frequently rude; while extreme inattention to their dress, indicated how little solicitous they were to please; and the entrance of beauty or elegance could scarcely for an instant withdraw their attention from the usual topics of conversation, which turned exclusively on military manœuvres, discussed with a spirit of ferocity and fierce contradiction, which seemed above control; and when rising from table, the gentlemen dispersed, they met us again in the evening with equal inattention, and quickly retiring from our attractions, for the most part, sat down to play; and it is inconceivable with what per-

severance and eagerness they pursued games of chance, and how many hours their attention remained rivetted to the rattling dice-box, or absorbed in watching the probable success of a single card, while all those modes of courtesy and politeness, which necessarily form the basis of civilized societies, were wholly disregarded as unworthy of attention. Rimini, to whom I communicated these observations, replied, That a change of manners, gradually approaching for the last half century, together with the inevitable influence of those horrors attendant upon the late revolution in France, had nearly effaced all remembrance of ancient fashions, and completely obliterated every former characteristic of the Frenchman.

"La belle passion, for instance," continued he, "once the invigorating principle of every action, the animating charm which distinguished each pass-

ing moment, is at present regarded with nearly the same indifference which prevails among the Esquimaux of North America; and their minds appear as frequently involved in sullenness and gloom: the whiffling activity of the Parisian pètit mâitre has given way to the rough uncouth demeanour which is supposed to denote the man of arms, while that civility and urbanity which formerly prevailed among every description of persons in this country, has yielded to coarseness and presumption, together with an affected frankness of behaviour, which displays sentiments which had better be concealed."

Notwithstanding her decided taste for solitude and domestic enjoyments, Madame de St. Hilaire prepared once more to enter Le Beau Monde, as her daughters, particularly the two eldest, were of an age to be introduced into

that society in which their rank and fortune entitled them to a pre-eminence. Angelica could seldom be prevailed upon to accept any invitation in which I was not included. I therefore frequently went into public, when my own inclinations, if consulted, would have detained me at home. The mornings were still engaged in receiving the instructions of different masters, whose lessons, however, were frequently interrupted by complaints of head-ache and lassitude, and the thoughts of my young companion often wandered to the more important subject of dress, and in debating what would be most becoming in the evening: the landscape in the morning was negligently shaded, and the sonata hurried over with a careless hand.

On entering the saloon at dinner-time, we usually found a numerous party assembled there; and those fa-

milies with whom I became better acquainted, shall be mentioned accordingly, as I proceed in my narrative. Immediately on rising from table, the company dispersed, and the evening was engaged in receiving or returning visits, or attending places of public or private amusement, to which we were usually escorted by Rimini and de Linois. About a week after our arrival at Paris, we prepared to attend a ball given by Madame de Cambaceres, whose husband was arch-chancellor of the emperor, and an unusual display of elegance was expected on the occasion. All the people in power and foreign ambassadors received a summons accordingly, which few could be supposed to resist from so fashionable a lady. I exerted my skill to the utmost in adorning Angelica de St. Hilaire, and ornamented her silken black hair with small rows of pearl,

and fastened her white crape robe with diamond clasps. The short sleeve left her beautiful arms perfectly uncovered, and the dress retreating from her neck and shoulders, displayed the fine contour of her form; white satin sandals in part covered her pretty foot; joy and expectation sparkled in her dark eyes, and tinged her face with the glow of the half-blown rose: she resembled the youngest of the graces.

Attended by de Linois and Rimini, I accompanied Madame and Angelica to the superb mansion of Madame de Cambaceres, in the Fauxbourg St. Honore. After crossing an anti-chamber, we entered an apartment, at the entrance of which she stood to receive her guests, dressed in black velvet, without any ornament whatever, except a superb cross of brilliants suspended from her bosom.

Madame de Cambaceres appeared

about thirty years of age, her features fine and expressive, complexion rather pale, and manners natural and elegant. She received and returned our compliments with polished ease and vivacity, but her attention was quickly withdrawn by the entrance of another party; we therefore advanced into the ball-room. Wreaths of artificial flowers were twined round light pillars of painted wood, placed at equal distances from the wall, and formed into arches over several magnificent paintings, representing figures as large as life, dancing with gay accuracy the characteristic dance of each country. The negroes of South America, whose ebony skin was ornamented with rows of the jambo bead, forgetful of the bonds of slavery, danced in sportful attitude beneath the spreading palm tree, the fandango which calls forth every grace of form, and expression of

feature. The bolero, sometimes verging beyond the bounds of delicacy, and the hornpipe, expressive of firmness and intrepidity, were all in turn presented to the view.

At the head of the room was pourtrayed a group of dancing girls on the coast of Malabar: their light garments, fastened round the waist with a narrow belt of twisted silk, seemed to flutter in the breeze; a graceful wreath of wrought satin twined in many folds round the head, and each well turned wrist and ancle was adorned with gold bracelets.

The gilded spires of a Mosque glittered at a distance, and some old men sat near them smoking the betel root. Our eyes rested with pleasure on lamps placed under globes of glass, which shed a soft light on the floor, which was coloured with shades of green chalk, and resembled a mossy turf.

A band of music placed in the orchestra played a variety of popular tunes, and the dancing commenced soon after we entered.

We stood for some moments admiring the graceful cotillion, when de Linois claiming the hand of Angelica, joined them, and as Madame wished to form a card party, and I declined dancing, we retired to another room, from whence we could observe the company, without being incommoded by the crowd.

Rimini directed my attention to the Turkish ambassador, Suliman Mustapha, who passed before us. He was tall and dignified in his deportment, sun-burnt complexion, long features, black eyes, bushy beard. His turban displayed an aigretta, valued at twelve millions of livres; he wore a close crimson vest, and loose robe of green silk with a full short sleeve, wide yel-

low pantaloons, and pointed slippers of the same colour; a broad crimson silk sash partly confined his robe, from which hung a short scimitar; the hilt and sheath entirely covered with precious stones. He was followed by his interpreter and another attendant.

A mulatto lady, fatigued by dancing, had seated herself near me: she was extremely beautiful, and the characteristic features of her country so much softened as to leave only a degree of expression *piquante*, extremely interesting; this was further heightened by the style of her dress: a short robe of spotted silk, resembling the leopard's skin, was worn over a scarlet petticoat, ornamented with wreaths of small shells and beads; a silk handkerchief of various hues was twisted round her head in a fanciful becoming manner, and her diamond necklace and ear-rings were extremely splendid.—

"That lady," continued Rimini, "is a native of St. Domingo, and accompanied the Princess Borghese on her return to France. Her beauty, and the singularity of her appearance, created general notice, and engaged the attention of M de la Fouch. He married her: she speaks broken French, and there is as much caprice and inconsistency in her character as variety in the colours of her dress. She is one of those women whose sole happiness consists in inspiring la belle passion; which pursuit engages all her thoughts, and when accomplished the lover is immediately discarded with the same indifference as an old glove or a fan. This lady's insatiable wish of exciting admiration and of rivetting attention, necessarily gives rise to various ridiculous anecdotes. A short time ago she wrote three let-

ters, expressive of great tenderness, to three of her admirers; one of whom was a German and the other an Italian, very little acquainted with each other, and not at all with the third, who is a native of Paris.

The foreigners met accidentally at a coffee-house, and in the course of a conversation, which happened to turn upon the beauty and fidelity of their respective mistresses, Madame de St. Fonche's letters were exhibited, much to the dismay of the rivals, who each in turn pronounced the words forgery, perfidy, &c. &c. The altercation continued with increased vehemence. The German brandished his sabre, while his antagonist, the Italian, flourished his stiletto; at that moment a gentleman by accident walked into the apartment, and interfered in so sensible and judicious a manner, that

the combatants submitted the affair to his decision, and shewed him the letters which had given rise to this exuberance of wrath, and which the stranger surveyed for an instant with infinite indifference, and throwing the letters on the table, exclaimed with a sarcastic smile:—"Il vaut bien la peine de s'egorger pour cela, attendez un peu;" saying this he opened his pocket-book and exhibited a third, similar in every respect to the former two. The foreigners, darting a look of chagrin and rage at each other, and at the Frenchman, disappeared, while the latter very quietly adjourned to the Thuilleries, and very deliberately detailed this anecdote to those who happened to be acquainted with the parties concerned.

"That tall woman in white," continued Rimini, "who moves with

the majesty of a Juno, is an Italian by birth; and the lady who sits opposite to Madame de St. Hilaire at the card table, is her sister. They were originally placed in a convent at Rome by Pope Pius the Fifth, and educated as his nieces, but report gives them a nearer claim to his protection.

"They received a brilliant education, and equally excel in the science of music and painting. The picture which you admired so much this morning in the Palais de Louvre, representing St. John the Baptist preaching in the Wilderness, is her performance; and in singing her voice is exquisitely beautiful and soft. At fifteen she married the Marquis de Castelalla, who fell at Geneva, 1802, in an engagement with a detachment of our guards. She afterwards experienced a train of disasters, and in order

to avoid those horrors inseparable from war, was forced to take shelter with her infant son in the Appenine mountains, subsisting upon the wild fruits and herbs which accident threw in her way; retiring at sun-set to some lonely cave, continuing watchful till day-break, trembling and terrified by the howling of the wolves round the entrance of it. In the midst of all her dangers and alarms her infant son reposed on her bosom, and his presence pointed every misery with unerring aim to her heart. She beheld herself on the eve of being deprived of an existence which she eagerly cherished on his account, and was sinking under the weight of her woes, when a detachment of our troops under the command of General Loison fortunately fell in her way, who immediately conveyed her to a place of safety, and she afterwards married

Monsieur de Real, brother to the director of the police. The boy who shared her dangers amidst the dreary Appenines is a fine youth, and an ensign in the first Legion of Honour.

"The lady in black, whom you see pressing through the company, and speaking with so much animation to those around her, is the ci-devant countess De Villeroy, a zealous adherent to the late nobility of France, and to all appearance an indefatigable partizan of the present. At the commencement of the revolution her property was seized, and she experienced a variety of disasters, while her son, the present viscount, zealously devoted to the house of Bourbon, pursued the fortunes of the Count d'Artois, who, retiring from the storms of anarchy and rebellion, sought refuge on the peaceful British shores. Notwithstanding the persecutions which Ma-

dame de Villeroy had suffered, she could not resolve to quit her native country, or break those local attachments which fold round the heart by insensible gradations, but adhere to it with resistless persistency; and other ties of a softer nature remaining unbroken, she employed every energy of her mind in the pursuit of those measures most adequate to the purpose of regaining some degree of her former influence among persons in power; and nature having endowed her with those irresistible attractions which survive the decay of beauty, and extend their influence even to the season of decrepitude; Madame de Villeroy succeeded in securing the interest she sought to obtain, and the restoration of her wealth and honours followed in course; but all endeavours to attract her son to France have proved fruitless. He views with sentiments of disappro-

bation and aversion every measure which has been pursued by the present government, and cherishes in his bosom the most unfeigned detestation against those who have conspired to exile his master's house from the throne, and condemned the Bourbon family to eternal reprobation and banishment.

The Countess de Villeroy is said to possess an ardent intriguing spirit; and it is to be feared that this disposition, so fruitful in engendering woe, will in the end prove destructive to those advantages which they have been the means of procuring, and detrimental to the interests of those with whom she is connected. Madame de Villeroy is well known in the literary world: she writes with elegance and spirit, but her writings have a dangerous tendency: they exalt the imagination too much, and by that means frequently corrupt the heart.

I observed a gentleman at some distance, whose vest was decorated with a brilliant solitaire: he was a tall graceful man, with a fair complexion, light reddish hair and mustachos, and wore a dark green coat, lined and trimmed with sable, and fastened with diamond buttons.

"That gentleman," replied Rimini, "is the Russian ambassador, Prince Kuskini; and those diamonds which have attracted your eyes are a mark of royal favour bestowed upon his father by the Empress Catherine the Second. The late Emperor Paul equally distinguished the son, who is modest and unassuming, liberal and unaspiring: he has commanded armies, and served his country, without any ambition for rank or intrigues to obtain pre-eminence.—But turn your eyes to the lady who is conversing with the Turkish ambassador."

I did so, and saw one of the most beautiful women I ever beheld, dressed in the usual Turkish costume, yellow turban, loose robe, broad belt, and aigrette of precious stones; tall, and elegantly formed: her features were loveliness and regularity itself; a Grecian face, and fine pointed eye-brows, and long black eye-lashes shaded her sparkling black eyes: she appeared about six and twenty.

"That lady," continued Rimini, "is a Mahometan. When General Menou commanded our troops during the siege of Alexandria, a few weeks before the capitulation took place, he was one day followed by an old woman, who accosted him in Arabic in these words: 'Follow me, and you will have no cause for repentance,' at the same time putting into his hand a small basket of flowers, ornamented with threads of gold. Menou, sufficiently

acquainted with the manners of the country, understood her perfectly; and, curious to see the female, whose attention he had excited, silently made signs for her to lead on; and following her a considerable way, she at length stopped at the door of a building in the suburbs of the city, of considerable extent. The old woman clapped her hands, and a negro appeared, who opened the gate; and shutting it carefully after them, the general was conducted through many a winding passage into an apartment strewed with flowers, and shaded from the sunbeams, in the centre of which, Zelume, whom you now behold at Paris, was seated, surrounded by her female attendants, reposing upon an embroidered cushion. She looked up at his entrance, and smiling, said that curiosity to see a Christian warrior had induced her to send for him; that she was sa-

tisfied, and he might retire as soon as he pleased.

"However, they afterwards made a different arrangement: one visit succeeded another, and Zelume at last consented to share his fortunes, and to become his wife. I see she still retains the custom of blackening the edge of her eye-lids, and staining the palms of her hands with a yellow dye; but nothing can tarnish her matchless beauty, or obscure her native charms.

"That gentleman," continued Rimini, "who is standing a little to the left of Zelume, and who fixes his eyes upon you with so much obtrusive attention, is one of the descendants of Abraham, whose wealth and moderate share of abilities have introduced into the gay circles of Paris, particularly since the Emperor Napoleon has extended his protection to that discarded race."

I directed my eyes accordingly, and beheld a man, tall in stature, and commanding in aspect; his high open forehead indicating genius, his eyes dark and penetrating, distinguished by an equivocal expression, difficult to define, while the loss of his front teeth gave him an appearance of antiquity, which might possibly be fallacious: he could not, however, be less than fifty years of age.

"That personage," said Rimini, "indulges the perverseness of his humour in a strain of acrimonious language, and cavalier deportment, whenever circumstances present him with an opportunity of doing so with impunity. He is ambitious of being thought a man of the world, and lays claim to the character of benevolence, vainly supposing that an impertinent and troublesome attention to your sex, together with that unmeaning jargon, affected

by the fashionable fop, entitles him to the one, and that an ostentatious display of charitable donations gives him full claim to the other, while he does not hesitate to wound the feelings of the gentle, the unassuming, and the unprotected, by severe retorts and bitter reprehension, and renders himself a just subject of ridicule, by his assumed airs of courtly levity, which are worn so awkwardly as to disclose to view the homely garb beneath."

Madame now rose from the card-table, and joining us, we went into the ball-room, and after remaining there half an hour, the company entered the supper-room, and found the tables spread with every delicacy which art or nature could supply. Small gold baskets filled with flowers were placed among the dishes, and the sweet hyacinths and tender lily of the valley bloomed defiance to the stern frowns of

winter. The dancing was reassumed after supper, but madame refused to let her daughter return to the ball-room; therefore, when the carriage drew up, we returned to the hotel.

CHAP. IX.

L'amour commence par l'amour et l'on ne scauroit passer de la plus forte amitie qu'a un amour faible.

BRUYERE.

I was writing in my apartment one morning, when Angelica hastily opened the door, exclaiming—"I have got some beautiful drawings in the saloon to shew you: come away directly, or perhaps they will be gone." There was a smiling archness in her manner which I could by no means account for; but when she threw open the door of the saloon, I there perceived de Verneuil, and immediately advanced to meet him, expressing in a lively manner the pleasure I felt at seeing him, after an absence of some

months. He looked pale and thin, and continued standing by the window with a pre-occupied air, during the time that Angelica remained in the room. As soon as we were alone, he approached me, and fixing his eyes steadily on mine, addressed me in a slow hesitating manner, as follows:

"My heart trembles, and my voice falters, Giovanna, while I conjure you to explain the meaning of those smiles which animated your lovely face, and of that joy which sparkled in your expressive eyes a few moments ago, when you advanced to receive me. Am I so supremely blest as to have excited an interest in your bosom, or is your countenance an unfaithful mirror of your heart?"

Painful were the sentiments which arose in my mind, while I reluctantly undeceived him. "I should despise myself, de Verneuil, were I incapable

of appreciating your worth, and every sentiment of esteem and friendship is freely your's; but you must exert your resolution to conquer a passion which I do not—cannot return. Withdraw your thoughts from me, and bestow your attentions on some woman more deserving of them, and may you enjoy with her that felicity which I am not destined to bestow."

"How can you coolly stab me to the heart, cruel Giovanna! or bid me seek elsewhere those attractions which you alone possess? Permit me, at least, to persevere in my assiduities, and to hope that my unremitting tenderness, and ardent demonstration of affection, may at last meet with some return."

"On the contrary, de Verneuil, resolve to relinquish so ill-requited an attachment: I will not flatter you with hopes which must inevitably end in disappointment."

"Then, by heaven, Giovanna!" exclaimed he, "you love another. Who is this happy rival? By what magic has he succeeded in interesting your frozen heart? Would he follow your steps to the desert, and hail the wilds of Siberia as the garden of Eden, if blessed with your presence? Ah, no! this devoted tenderness, this ardent love, is reserved for me alone; and your imagination adorns him with perfection and devotedness he does not possess."

"He turned to conceal his emotion: confused and distressed by his vehemence, and less inclined than ever to return his affection, I could only repeat in broken accents what I had already said, which I endeavoured to soften as much as possible. He listened to me for some moments attentively, and at last starting up, exclaimed—"Farewel! and may you

never feel the anguish of seeing the happiness you most desire cruelly withdrawn from your wishes."

Alas! in a few months I fully understood the force of his last words; but I must not interrupt my narrative. Though Madame de St. Hilaire invariably conducted herself towards me with gentleness and kindness, yet there was an habitual reserve in her manner which checked all communication on my side, as to what particularly concerned myself; but if I was debarred the advantage of counsel and advice, I was also relieved from every species of persecution. Our conversation, when alone, incessantly turned on her daughter's improvement; and she beheld with rapture their beauty and talent. She either did not perceive, or attended not to de Verneuil's assiduities, never on any occasion either approving them, or discommending me for repressing his

hopes. Usually reserved and distant in society, unless her attention was particularly required, she was, however, always disposed to be pleased, though she seldom made any efforts to please others, and had frequent opportunities of seeing her husband's marked attention to other women, without even expressing or seeming to feel the slightest displeasure. Perfectly indifferent to all his movements, his absence or presence, departure or return, were events of equal unconcern; and any uneasiness I might be supposed to feel, in regard to his attention respecting myself, vanished, as he had never, since my arrival in Paris, in the least distinguished me from the rest of the family: his behaviour was civil and friendly, but nothing more.

The Princess Boughese's birth-day approached, and splendid preparations were making to celebrate it. Prince

Kuskin gave orders for the erection of a temporary building near his palace, for the purpose of giving a masked ball on the occasion. The public buildings were littered with scaffolding, workmen, &c. some of whom were fixing transparencies, and others suspending coloured lamps in every form which imagination could suggest. As the evening advanced, we began the entertaining employment of putting on our masquerade dresses; and it was after a thousand alterations, that we agreed to let the ornaments remain as they were, for the remainder of the evening.

Angelica and her sisters, as flower-girls, wore transparent gauze dresses, with small bunches of flowers lightly strewed over them. Their hair was wreathed with leaves of myrtle, and bunches of the winter cherry; and each carried an elegant basket, filled with

the choicest fruits and flowers which the Paris hot-houses could furnish. Madame, as a Scotch chieftain's wife, wore a plaid and bonnet blue; and my dress consisted of a black crape mantle, spangled with silver stars, over a robe of light grey: a brilliant crescent sparkled in my hair, which was partly shaded by a long black veil, edged with stars, and appearing to form part of the mantle; a bunch of poppies in my hand denoted the goddess of night. De Linois followed Angelica as a shepherd of the Alps: his light vest, slashed sleeves, and hat adorned with a plume of feathers, conveyed an idea of picturesque beauty, not easily expressed: a flageolet, which he occasionally blew with taste and skill, completed the interest of the costume. De St. Hilaire looked martial and well as a Moorish chief. Rimini wore a black domino.

On our way to the ambassador's hotel, we paused frequently to admire the illuminations, which were entirely confined to the public buildings. La Place de Vendome was a blaze of light, and coloured lamps, intermingled with flowering shrubs, were placed before the half circular buildings in endless variety. The walks in the Thuilleries were lighted in the same manner, and the statues appeared of a dazzling white among the evergreen trees. A flight of rockets rose suddenly from the *Champs Elisées*, and for a moment restored to the firmament the splendour of day. Stars of lamps decorated the spire of Notre Dame; and the other churches shone with a thousand rays; and the arched windows reflected the light of the fire-works, as they traversed the air, in every form and in every direction.

When we arrived at Prince Kuski-

ni's, it was some moments before I could usfficiently collect my thoughts, so as to make any observation on the gay assemblage before me; an immense saloon was hung with painted canvas representing scenes taken from Ovid's Metamorphoses and Ariostos romances. Festoons of coloured silks, and crape, fancifully arranged, formed a drapery round them, and a magnificient chandeliers placed with symmetry and skill, heightened the brilliant effect: several additional rooms were thrown open, and music, cards, and refreshment disposed accordingly. I soon discovered that a masquerade possesses few attractions beyond the first moments of entrance: when the eye becomes familiar with the decorations, the motley group affords little amusement: all conversation is necessarily suspended, and each distinguishing trait of countenance and manners, lost in the display of the fictitious

character, few of which are sufficiently well supported, to make amends for the folly and insipidity of the others. Among the few whom I thought worthy of notice were some English sailors dressed in blue jackets, check trowsers, round black hats, and silk handkerchiefs: they sung a catch song, and, joining in chorus, wished that the sovereigns of the land and rulers of the sea, might soon drink grog together, and boughs of their honest oak be twined with the Fleur de Lys. A very good mask represented their celebrated tragedian John Kemble: he wore a black vest, richly ornamented with gold, a helmet and feather of the same colour and grasping a dagger repeated some lines from one of their favourite tragedies.

A group, representing Alexander of Macedon, followed by the Royal captives of Persia, excited much attention.

The invincible ensigns of the hero were borne before him, and his armour appeared resplendent as burnished gold: his helmet was crowned by that formidable black plume, which had struck terror into the heart of multitudes, numberless as the stars of heaven: the flowing robes of the captives were purple, and their chains of gold, while those which hung suspended from the arms of the Princess Statira, appeared supported by the hero of Macedon.

Several satyrs surrounded the god Pan, dancing fantastically, striking the ground with their golden hoofs, in just measure to the tune which he blew upon his reeds. Their shape was entirely displayed, and completely powdered with a light greyish down, pointed ears stood erect; their brows were encircled with ivy leaves, festoons of which they extended, and formed

into various shapes, and bowing in obedience to their deity.

At twelve o'clock the Emperor's chamberlain, Count du Manoir, announced the arrival of their majesties, the company immediately unmasked and the ambassador hastened to receive his Royal guests, who entered followed by the Prince and Princess Borghese, Prince and Princess De Lyons, Count Raymond Baron Touserd, &c. &c. &c. His majesty was dressed in regimentals and the empress attired in purple and gold. I stood within a few paces of Napoleon the first, and raising my eyes, fixed them attentively on the man who seems destined by the supreme powers to promote eventually the good of the human race, by the extension of knowledge, and the destruction of superstition and idolatory. When viewing persons of no very uncommon cast, the mind is sufficiently at leisure to trace

the form of each feature, and to mark the colour of the complexion, and shade of the hair; but on the present occasion those emanations which so eminently distinguish the emperor's countenance alone engaged my attention: a peculiar degree of calmness spread over his features, indicates a mind self balanced, self possessed, exempt from those frivolous passions, those insignificant pursuits which too frequently distract the minds of unhappy mortals: penetration and judgment are seated on his brow, and announce the mind prompt in discriminating, active in seizing those opportunities of aggrandizement, which indulgent fortune so liberally presents to his wishes: and may the dark vapours of faction and rebellion retire at his approach into their native obscurity! and may his course be continued through an unclouded sky! and may he complete

the glory of his career by extending the olive branch to surrounding nations, and causing the temple of peace to arise from the ruins of superstition and corrupt administration!

After receiving the homage of the nobility, and speaking to several of their subjects with condescension and affability, their majesties paused, to observe a reel danced by some performers from the opera-house: they wore blue jackets and short skirts of different coloured cloths, and nankeen pantaloons; a broad silk sash was tied across the shoulders, ornamented with coloured tassels, a plume of feathers wavered gracefully over the side of the head, and appeared confined by a check band: their movements in the dance were rapid and martial, but I thought them deficient in grace. Their majesties retired about one o'clock, and soon afterwards the amusements were

re-assumed, and a troop of gypsies almost immediately engaged my attention: they were dressed in a fantastic manner, their garments marked with magic figures: one of these females flourished a tambarine, and gingled the bells with inconceivable vivacity, while another sounded the pipe and tabour; a third displayed a scarlet flag, whereon were painted the signs of the zodiac, and other grotesque shapes, and she lightly touched those with the end of it, to whom half singing and half saying she delivered her oracles. I stood attentively viewing their movements, when she who carried the flag stopt suddenly, touched me with the end of it, singing as follows.—

"Fair girl beware,
"Or ill betide you;
"Evil wakes and walks beside you;
"Still abide by virtue fair,
"Who ever makes the good her care:
"Call upon each guardian sprite,
"You'll think of me e'er morning light."

On saying this she whirled round with astonishing rapidity; the tambarine was flourished, the bells gingled, and the group retiring mixed with the crowd. I turned to make some observations to my friends, but found they were all dispersed except Rimini, who stood near me in his black domino. I immediately requested he would assist me in regaining my party, but we traversed the room for this purpose in vain. Fatigued with the heat, and oppressed by the numerous company, I stood irresolute, not knowing how to proceed, and very apprehensive est madame should have quitted the hotel without me. I was confused and uneasy at finding myself alone with Rimini; and though the few words he spoke were in an undertone of voice, yet there was a freedom in his manner which I had never observed before, and could by no means account for. I conti-

nued searching for my friends in a hurried anxious manner till I was literally unable to stand, when my companion drew me to a seat a little apart from the company, and I repulsed him with indignation, as he threw his arms round my waist, and endeavoured to draw me towards him. "Come, come, Giovanna, be not so angry:" and I started at recognizing de St. Hilaire's voice: "Stay," continued he, forcibly detaining me as I endeavoured to get away; "don't be ridiculous and draw the eyes of the company upon us, but listen to what I have to say: I adore you; return my passion, and I will pledge myself to any amount you please to marry you when ever I am free. In the mean time every advantage which wealth can procure shall be your's, and you shall enjoy with it the undivided possession of my heart; be but discreet, and all

will be well." Indignation and contempt for a while checked my utterance; at length, recovering myself, "You have forced me, sir, to listen; will you in return attend to my reply? I solemnly declare that were you free to-morrow, and an empire your own, I would refuse it; your principles and your person are equally my aversion, and if you do not desist from your unwarrantable pursuit, I will instantly quit your family, and seek elsewhere that asylum which you so inhospitably deny me."

"Romantic stuff!" replied he: "silly girl! who do you suppose will receive you, unless you mean to take pity upon de Verneuil, and after refusing him follow his steps?"—I disdained to make any reply to this last observation; and observing madame enter at a distant part of the room, almost flew to meet her, out of the reach of her hus-

band, who now no longer detained me. I found that Rimini had been in search of me every where, and approached to hand me to the carriage which waited to convey us home, expressing himself in very flattering terms as to the uneasiness my absence from our party had occasioned him, I retired for the night with a mind full of vexation and anxiety: at the same time much as I was hurt at St. Hilaire's unjustifiable conduct, I felt that I should have been wounded tenfold had it proceeded from Rimini.

CHAP. X.

" Chi vuol dar legge a l'amoroso nodo,
Non sa ben qual sia sua natura ;
Luu d'una cosa, ed io de l'altro godo,
Chi lo spirito amo, chi sol la figura:
Chi diletta la vista chi l'udirè,
Chi sfogo ogni desir solo in servire."

If I was surprised at St. Helaire's conversation at the masquerade, I was little less so at the perfect ease and unconcern with which he met me on the following day, not alluding in the slightest manner to any thing that had passed, and accounting in the most easy and natural manner for having left our party the evening before : he had met a general officer at Prince Kuskini's, who had prevailed upon him to with-

draw for a quarter of an hour, to discourse over affairs relative to the inspection of regiments, and on his return had been unable to find us; and his behaviour to me was so perfectly frank, unconstrained, and good humoured, that I began to suspect my imagination had played me false; and that I had mistaken him for some other person. After wearying myself with conjectures to no purpose, I determined to dismiss the subject from my thoughts, as I could make nothing of it. I had soon occasion to remark that those personal attractions which de Linois so eminently possessed had made some impression on the lively imagination of Angelica de St. Hilaire, and I always suspected that, like most girls of her age, whatever pleased her eye would captivate her heart. De Linois's character was not of that description which could reasonably be expected to

promote domestic happiness, and I frequently expressed myself to her accordingly whenever we were alone, for on whatever subject the conversation began it always ended in discussing the merits of him who now constantly occupied her thoughts. All my objections were overruled, and arguments answered by a detail of perfections, not one of which he possessed, that I could only smile at her artless expressions of affection, and innocent credulity, and endeavour to change the conversation. St. Hilaire adored his daughter, and had always distinguished deLinois; and as a considerable fortune would attend her hand, any deficiency in that respect on the other side would be obviated, he therefore observed his assiduities, and Angelica's predilection, without displeasure. Madame took every opportunity of declaring with energy that her approbation

would always follow her daughter's choice.

"I have selected an anecdote from among the multitude of a similar nature with which Paris abounds, expressly for your amusement, "Giovanna," said de St. Hilaire, "smiling as he crossed the apartment, and seated himself on an ottoman at my feet. "Your favourite friend, the amiable and interesting Adeline de Seze, has taken possession in due form of Madame de St. Cyr's husband: they set off together yesterday morning, and it is supposed are gone to Rheims. The wife endures it very philosophically I assure you; and having pursuits of a similar nature herself, is *au fond du cœur* rejoiced at the triumph which this évnèment gives her over your sentimental friend, who has hitherto maintained an irreproachable character. My countenance betrayed my feelings

I believe while I expressed the concern which this intelligence gave me. Rimini approached to hear farther particulars, and Angelica, who was listening to some trifling remarks of her lover de Linois, expressed the greatest astonishment.

"It is no doubt very surprising," continued de St. Hilaire, smiling ironically, "and perfectly unnatural too, that a young woman who fancied it mighty meritorious to hold our sex at defiance, should at last take a fancy to a man precisely, when she had better have let it alone, mais on ne trompe jamais la nature impunement.

"However, in the present instance," continued he, "there is no harm done: after a few weeks absence, she will return to Paris with a lover, in addition to her other valuable possessions; she is immensely rich, and will soon find her account in it. For though her

Majesty the Empress Josephine has certainly effected some degree of reform among our Parisian ladies, yet they are still tremblingly alive to the influence of that universal panacea which heals all wounds and scars in the chastity of females." "We certainly must admit the omnipotence of rank and splendour," observed Rimini, "and those who move in an exalted sphere of life are often justly censured for an undue liberality of sentiment, which leads to the toleration of immorality: but I do not see how it can be otherwise; the nobles of a kingdom form a distinct community, comparatively small in number, and with usages and opinions in some degree peculiar to themselves; that leisure, which is the inseparable companion of affluence, fosters dissipation, and induces a carelessness and openness of demeanor, which displays unveiled the recesses of the human heart; vice, in all its variety of forms, passes in review

before their eyes, and they soon learn to behold it without displeasure or surprise, and their indulgence is more particularly extended to those frailties incident to the female sex; their daily observation has shewn them how difficult it is to withstand the blandishments of the lover, when contrasted with the morose frowns of the conjugal character.

"I will suppose a case in point," continued Rimini, "and, alas! it is not a fabulous one."

"A young person, possessed of refinement and delicacy of sentiment, alive to all the feelings of benevolence and tenderness of love; educated by careful and affectionate parents, her soul the abode of purity, her portion beauty and virtue alone; loses her natural guardians, marries a man of some rank and fortune, but whose habits of life and pursuits are in direct opposition to her own. Her feelings of benevolence,

and sentiments of piety, are wounded and ridiculed; her native modesty insulted, her happiness thwarted or disregarded; bitter sarcasm and reproach suppress her tears, and drive them back upon her heart with unutterable pangs: no gleam of consolation strikes athwart the gloom of despair: disgust, unqualified disgust has choaked every avenue of her soul, and closed it for ever against the possibility of domestic re-union: neglected by casual acquaintances or mercenary relatives, none will be found to hold intercourse with the mourner: yes, there is an eye which expresses compassion and tenderness; there is a friend that participates in all her woes; and this, alas! is the man who has long adored her beauty, and hitherto sighed in vain: he now approaches her in all the captivating charms of sympathy and love, and in the delusive language of sophistry, points out to her a

path leading to happiness and not inconsistent with that of virtue. Accident may break the galling chain which weighs her to the grave: with what joy will she then bestow her hand upon the man who has shared her woes! Thus insensibly she listens to the voice of unhallowed love; unawares she enters the downward paths of vice, and perhaps it would require that fortitude which supported the martyr at the stake, under such circumstances to secure integrity.

Those attractions which Rimini so eminently possessed were of that description which captivate the senses through the medium of the heart. It was not therefore during the earliest period of our acquaintance that his perfections excited any particular degree of interest in my heart, or that his presence gave rise to any agitations in my soul; but when I gradually perceived that his conversation

had power to chace away every sense of weariness, and to dispel the attacks of anxiety and of pain; when his elegant and refined mind was disclosed to view by the inimitable grace and dignity which distinguished each look and motion, all competition vanished before him, and my happiness was quickly centered in Rimini's presence alone: the accents of his voice in conversation, though addressed to another, charmed my ear, while his manly and graceful attentions excited my admiration, though these held me not for their particular object; and it appeared altogether so remote and improbable a circumstance that Rimini should in any particular manner distinguish me by his assiduities, that my wishes for the present were limited to the satisfaction of beholding him, tracing with ever new delight the varying expression of his animated countenance, and view-

ing with silent approbation the grace of his demeanor and the elegance of his form.

How seductive are the charms of a rising passion, which creates a magic world around us, abounding in images of joy, where each object receives its tone and colour from that harmony which pervades our bosom! The most insignificant actions, the most trifling occurrences, give rise to felicity, when viewed through the divine medium of that fascination excited by the presence of those we love: adventitious circumstances fade into insignificance; conversation or silence, thoughts abstracted or concentrated: individual assiduity or general attentions, are of no moment whatever; the charm remains unbroken, secured by the presence of those we love: but delightful as are the approaches of tenderness they quickly yield to anxiety and suspense, which

mingles a bitter apprehension with its joys: each interview is expected to dissolve our doubts, and confirm the delicious expectation of having excited a corresponding attachment, while those fears which incessantly surpass our hopes, and flutter round the object we are most anxious to attain, painfully check our ardour, and we equally desire and avoid an eclaircissement.

I was no longer free and unembarrassed in the presence of Rimini, and when accident gave rise to a private interview, inquietude and embarrassment closed my lips, while solitude and apprehension accelerated the throbbing of my heart to a painful degree. I hastily withdrew from his presence, and was thus condemned to the torment of appearing assiduously to avoid a declaration of love from the lips of Rimini, which I joyfully would have received at the sacrifice of my existence.

CHAP. XI.

"Ne nous emportons point contre les hommes en voyant leur dureté leur ingratitude, leurs intrigues, leur fierté l'amour d'eux mêmes et l'oubli des autres; ils sont ainsi faits, c'est leur nature: c'est ne pouvoir supporter que la pierre tombe ou que le feu s'eleve."

TOWARDS the latter end of January the weather was uncommonly fine, the sun shone with unusual warmth, and accompanied by Rimini, Angelica, and her sisters, we returned to admire the paintings in the Palais du Louvre, and to walk in the garden of the Thuilleries. After having viewed the statues and paintings, we prepared to give place to others who were crowding in, when a lady passed us, followed by

two gentlemen in plain clothes. We beheld her with surprise, not having seen among the Parisian ladies so much beauty. She appeared about twenty, regular features, large blue eyes; her dress was white, without any ornament, and a slight veil was fastened to her hair, which was divided over the forehead, and folded up in braids behind. Her charms were heightened by an angelic sweetness spread over every feature of her face, and a shade of melancholy and interesting paleness indicated that she had not always been a stranger to affliction and woe.

Rimini addressed them with the cordiality of friendship, and after conversing together a few moments, he followed us, and we left the Louvre.

"The history of that lady," continued he, "is very remarkable.—You have no doubt heard of the Amatory Society of France; she was one of

their eleves, and three years ago was sent into Spain, when she underwent a variety of adventures, which I will relate to you presently, and that we may be free from interruption, let us proceed to one of the alcoves in the garden fronting the river; the sun I see shines into them. We accordingly seated ourselves, and prepared to listen attentively to Rimini, who spoke as follows.

HISTORY OF ALPHONSO D'ARVIDA AND ISABELLA DE POLIGNAC.

"In order to promote the aggrandizement of empires, and the benefits of civilized societies, it is necessary to have recourse to secret agency for the purpose of discovering and defeating any private cabals and intrigues against the state. These plans, so beneficial

in design, are too frequently made subservient to the views of individuals, and the public good is sacrificed at the shrine of the passions. The Amatory-Society of France is composed of thousands, held together by an invisible chain, known to each other, but undistinguishable to the rest of the community; whose deliberations are covered by the most impenetrable obscurity, whose decrees are arbitrary and despotic, executed by assassins, whose steel seldom fails to reach the heart of its unfortunate victim. Their chief agents are beautiful girls, selected for this purpose, and placed in seminaries, where every possible care is employed in adorning them with the most shewy and fascinating accomplishments, and initiating them into every species of art most likely to succeed in defeating the caution of age, and stealing the confidence of unwary

youth. Implicit obedience, and inviolable secresy is enjoined, together with activity in discovering every possible secret of state by every possible means.

"Isabella de Polignac was born at Paris, of noble parents, who perished at the beginning of the revolution by the guilliotine, when she was only eight years of age. Friendless and destitute she was kindly received by her nurse, who inhabited a hut in the suburbs of Paris, and sold fruit. The coarse attire, the homely garb of the lovely orphan could not obscure her charms, and the expressive softness of her dark blue eyes, the curly auburn hair, and skin of purest white, attracted the notice of an emissary belonging to the Amatory Society. Isabella was withdrawn from the care of her nurse, and every beauty of form, and energy of mind, called forth by a most brilliant

education; and at sixteen she was judged adequate to fulfil her intended avocation at the court of Madrid, where she arrived in the French ambassador's suite in 1805.

"It was not probable that the exquisite beauty and accomplishments of Isabella de Polignac would long remain undistinguished at the court of Ferdinand. The first time she appeared at the bull-fight, a murmur of applause ran round the circle, and the eyes of the young cavaliers were directed to the lovely stranger, who remained with modest and downcast eyes, apparently heedless of their approbation, and intent only on the combatants before her.

"The attention of the royal Marianna, consort to the prince of the Asturias, was attracted; she inquired her name, and the following morning Isabella was ordered to attend her.

If the princess was charmed at the first interview, she was yet more so at the second, and Isabella was soon appointed to attend her as maid of honour; each day advanced her in the good graces of her royal mistress, and whenever the demon of langüor and ennui hovered over the couch of the princess, Isabella touched her harp: the melting tone of her voice, the finished execution of her song rivetted attention, and the vanquished demon fled. Day after day her royal mistress would listen with mournful pleasure to the favourite modinas of her native country, and the sweet sounds of Isabella's harp still lingered in her ear after the chords had ceased to vibrate: another heart also owned her gentle sway.

"Had Lavater wished to depict manly beauty, he would have chosen for his model Alphonso d'Arvida; tall,

and finely formed, his open forehead and expressive eyes were shaded by shining dark hair, hanging in soft curls over his well-shaped eyebrows, and the motion of his lips when he smiled denoted frankness and sweetness of disposition; noble, generous, and sincere, his actions on every occasion denoted a soul within worthy of animating so matchless a form. Though feelingly alive to the attractions of the beautiful sex, he was susceptible to but one species of love, that of the noblest kind, and shrunk from every incitement to passion, the gratification of which was inconsistent with the strictest rules of virtue; and he could seldom conceal his detestation of licentiousness in all its forms. Early placed at court in the capacity of a page, he retired from his companions whenever he could not check by his presence indecency or profaneness.

He beheld the charms of Isabella with the warmest admiration, and passionately fond of music, the melody of her voice completed the enchantment. She was one day crossing an antichamber, leading to the apartment of her royal mistress, when one of the directing agents of the Amatory Society, named de la Croix, stood before her, and fixing his eyes stedfastly on her face, pronounced these laconic words:—'Fascinate Alphonso d'Arvida.'—Words too much in unison with the dictates of her own heart not to be obeyed. Returning to the palace late one evening, Alphonso perceived the eastern part of the atmosphere blazing like a flood of fire, and flames and sparks ascending from that part of the building occupied by the attendants in waiting on the princess. The recollection of Isabella rushed into his mind; he endeavoured by incredible

exertions to force his way through the crowd which obstructed his path; he succeeded, and beheld a hideous and wide spreading ruin, and meeting several who escaped through the fire, without being able to gain any intelligence of Isabella, with frantic grasp he seized a ladder, and the wind for an instant blowing away the flames, he mounted on burning beams, and treading upon heated stones, reached the chamber of his mistress. A female rushed through the smoke, and throwing herself into his arms, exclaimed, 'Oh! save me, Alphonso.' It was Isabella. Raising the woman he loved in his arms, he seemed endowed with supernatural strength, and with resistless intrepidity he bore her to the ladder, and cautiously descending, had reached the ground, when the roof of the building fell with a hideous crash. The receding flames gave way for a

moment, but instantly rose again with tenfold fury, flinging their spiry columns to the skies.

Isabella revived at the accents of her lover's voice, who, hanging over her, watched for returning life with suspense and agonizing dread. Gratitude rivetted every tender sentiment, and from that hour she watched over the safety of Alphonso with a guardian angel's care. Isabella, though initiated into the paths of intrigue, possessed, nevertheless, a mind full of native modesty and candour; every particle of these dispositions was called forth, and excited by the exalted mind of her lover: each succeeding day increased their mutual affection, and gave her those additional charms attendant upon a virtuous attachment. The precepts of the Amatory Society began to retire far away from her recollection; when she was reminded of

them in the following manner:—At a short distance from the palace she was one morning accosted by de la Croix. He addressed her thus, in a severe tone of voice and gesture:—

"Have you, Isabella, been faithful to your trust? Have you succeeded in gaining Alphonso's confidence and affection, without cherishing any corresponding emotions of love? Prove it, then, by appointing him a rendezvous this very night at twelve o'clock, in the right-hand walk leading from the chapel of Santa Maria.—Silence, and beware!' He disappeared. Isabella's consternation cannot be described: too well she knew the purport of the fatal rendezvous, and fear for her lover's life deprived her limbs of motion, and drove the blood tumultuously to her heart. She continued a considerable time fast to the spot on which she stood when La Croix left her; and, at last,

starting, as the horrible image crossed her, soul of Alphonso wounded and bleeding by the hand of an assassin, she fled to her apartment. 'Some measures must be instantly resolved upon,' said she, 'or my Alphonso, my benefactor, my friend, will never again behold the rising of the sun!' Seizing a pen, she traced with trembling fingers an injunction that he would instantly fly from Madrid; and bidding him adieu for ever, folded the scroll, and sealing it, "tempered the pliant wax with falling tears." She concealed the letter in her bosom, and hurrying to the place where the pages usually sat, she beckoned to him who waited upon Alphonso, gave it into his hand, and enjoined him, with breathless agitation, to deliver it instantly to his master. The smiling boy took the letter, and went in search of Alphonso, who was at the bull-fight,

and who no sooner recovered from the perturbation it occasioned him, than he hastened to find Don Juan de Tortoso, and shewed him Isabella's letter. Alphonso, though a favourite with his sovereign, was fortunate enough to have a friend; and it was finally resolved between them, that he should retire to the frontiers of Spain for the present, there to wait for further information, and act accordingly as circumstances should require. Alphonso returned to the palace in search of Isabella, to make her, if possible, the companion of his flight: after searching for her long in vain, he discovered her at some distance, walking in a garden, and followed her into a shady path, secured from observation by a thick hedge of myrtle on either side: he took courage to throw his arms round her lovely waist, and unconsciously she pressed him to her heart,

and bade him leave her, yet detained him still: 'I swear by every thing that is sacred,' cried he, 'that I will not leave Madrid unless you consent to accompany my flight; it rests with yourself, whether to see me fall by the hand of treachery, or, uniting your fate with mine, seek security in a distant country, out of the reach of our enemies.' Distracting were the sensations which rose in the mind of Isabella, and cruel were the contending emotions. Decency forbade her following the fortunes of Alphonso, unsanctioned by sacred ties; while fears for her lover's life withdrew the blood from her quivering lips, as she intreated him to hasten away. Seeing him determined not to leave her behind, love vanquished her scruples; she silently and reluctantly acquiesced. He proposed that they should leave Madrid in the evening, followed only by their trusty page; and

making the best of their way through old Castile, wait upon the frontiers for that information, which their friend Don Juan would not fail to give.

"Alphonso and Isabella left Madrid as soon as the shade of evening began to descend, and travelled by the light of the stars along the plains of Il Pardo, and at sun-rise found themselves inveloped in the mountains of Gradeliare. They alighted from their mules, and reposing on the grass, made a slight repast on the provisions they brought with them, and they formed projects for their future lives, forgetting the danger which might frustrate them. Alphonso was at no loss to decide why the Amatory Society took aim at his bosom—a descendant of the ancient house of Arvida, every member of which had been undaunted and zealous adherents of the monarchy, Alphonso strenuously resisted the encroachments of the Prince

of Peace, who was supposed to second the politics of the court of France:—'But, my Isabella,' exclaimed he, pressing her to his breast, "behold how joy arises from danger, and harmony out of discord! Blessed with thy presence, charmed by thy smiles, impotent are the frowns of fortune; and the arrows of adversity, ere they reach my bosom, fall blunted to the ground.'

"They continued their route along the vallies of Terracania, and sometimes were bewildered among the forests which skirted the hills; it was near sun-set, when they beheld a ruined castle surrounded by mountains, covered with thick forests of gloomy pine-trees. The deep and narrow valley from which the turrets arose, precluded all extent of view, and sterility and silence reigned around. In this habitation, such as it was, Isabella requested her lover to conduct her; and exhausted by fa-

tigue and agitation, determined to take rest. They entered a hall, and traversed most part of it without tracing a footstep, or hearing the sound of a human voice, though it seemed to have been recently inhabited: a circle of stones had been formed on the pavement, and some half-extinguished embers lay on the ground, while coarse implements of kitchen-fare lay scattered here and there in rude disorder. They had recourse to the remainder of their provision, and prepared to wait patiently till repose should enable them to pursue their journey. The shadows of evening began to extend from the trees of the forest, and the tops of the mountains were gilded by the beams of the setting sun; no sound met the ear but the rustling of the wind as it swept by in sullen murmurs. Night was approaching, when Alphonso, who stood looking from a broken casement, be-

held a troop of horsemen opening from the gloom of the forest, and advancing full speed towards the castle. Perturbation was visible in their motions, and the words they uttered as they alighted at the gate were rather confused murmurs than articulate words:—'But what have we got here?' said one of them, seeing Alphonso, who with one arm supported the trembling Isabella, and with the other hand grasped his dagger.—A tall and manly figure, with a fierce eye and rugged countenance entered, and the others gave way before him; he wore a short vest and cloak of dark blue, a helmet, or furred cap on his head, a leather belt was buckled round his waist, and in it was stuck a pistol and a sword: advancing towards Alphonso, with a steady step and commanding air, he thus addressed him:—

'Noble cavalier, dismiss every ap-

prehension, as to your own safety and that of the lady, whom I see trembling by your side: I command a troop of gallant fellows, and though we subsist upon plunder, yet we also know how to respect the laws of hospitality: you are under the shadow of our roof, repose here in peace this night, partake of our cheer, and to-morrow I will send two of my men, who shall escort you to the bounds of the forest, and protect you from any of our stragglers.'

"So saying he unbuckled his leather belt, took off his helmet, and placed them on a stone bench near the door, and ordered his attendants to prepare the supper.

The troop consisted of near fifty rough looking men, coarsely clad, some of whom were seated on the ground cleaning their fire arms, while others re-kindled the fire, and began

dressing the wild venison which they had that morning caught in their toils, and quickly placed upon the table, while the company riotously took their places, and set down to supper. The chief of the band placed Alphonso and Isabella to the right and left, but all was for some moments a scene of scrambling and confusion. When the repast was ended, he commanded silence, and spoke to them as follows:—

"Far different from these moldering turrets, and dismantled chambers, was my paternal abode, and unlike these rude companions were those of my early years. Don Pedro, of Tudella, chief seneschal of Madrid, was my father, and he inhabited the magnificent palace of Losdones, near the city. I was educated at the university of Segovia, with every distinction which affluence and parental affection

could devise, and having finished my studies, returned to Madrid, and eagerly pursued those amusements and dissipations so seductive to the minds of youth and inexperience. I had completed my twenty-first year, when I beheld at the festival of the Annunciation the young Ildefonsa, whose father, the old Count de Molina, had lately brought to court for the first time. Her image, as I then beheld her, accompanies me in the gloom of the forest; neither can the howling of the tempest, or the clash of our swords, drive it from before my eyes; lovely woman, bright mischief, innocent cause of all my woes! You taught me to feel the raptures of virtuous love, and you drove my parents into exile, and condemned me to become an outcast and a plunderer thus. On that memorable day, the service in the chapel of the Escurial was begun; the swel-

ling notes of the organ had yielded to the exquisite melody of a human voice, chaunting a hymn to the Holy Virgin, when Ildefonsa entered, arrayed in black; a transparent veil shaded her angelic face, and fell in light folds over her neck and shoulders; advancing with downcast eyes, she threw herself at the foot of the altar, and crossing her lovely arms on her bosom, adored the Mother of her redeemer. Ildefonsa became from that day the arbitress of my fate. I frequently passed hours in endeavouring to catch a glimpse of her figure, as she approached the balcony to catch the evening breeze, and endeavoured to engage her attention to the harmony of the lute and guitar. My assiduities at length met with success; she condescended to behold me with some degree of approbation, nor turned disdainfully away when I presented the

consecrated flowers for her acceptance, and she smiling dipped her rosy finger in the holy water, which I took care to offer whenever she entered the chapel. I was at length suffered to breath my vows of everlasting adoration at her feet.

"Ildefonsa was gentle and timid, inclined to melancholy, which disposition the events of her life had contributed to establish. She lost her mother at an early age, and the old count, her father, possessed one of those cold and insensible minds, which receive from the dispositions of those around them but slight and fugitive impressions; one might have been tortured before his eyes without his betraying any emotion, and have died without his expressing any concern; and the few emotions which age and natural stupidity had spared, were under the direction of the grossest superstition.

With him the gentle Ildefonsa could hold no communion, and debarred by the absurd system of pride and seclusion, from associating with others of her own age, herself an only child, Ildefonsa was alone in the world; in my sentiments she met with a refuge from this mental destitution, and in the continuance of my love all her happiness centered.

"The Count de Molina, whose increasing age and infirmities rarely permitted to appear in public, received my father's overtures on behalf of his son with apparent satisfaction, and a day was fixed for our nuptials, when the machinations of a villain blasted our hopes, and laid our happiness in the dust for ever. Going into her apartment one day suddenly, I found her in tears, and it was long before her emotions would permit her to explain to me the cause.

"'Alas! Don Pedro,' said she, sobbing violently, 'I fear I shall never be your's: it breaks my heart to tell you that my father's confessor, Sebastian, has prevailed upon him to consign his unhappy child to the miseries of everlasting seclusion. I am shortly to enter the convent of St. Augusta, and alas! the gates will close on me then for ever.'

"Tears and sobs choaked her utterance. 'May everlasting torments seize the villain,' replied I, 'and the vulture for ever gnaw his avaricious soul! You are too rich a prize to escape those cursed harpies, but he shall shortly receive his punishment from my hand.'

"'Oh! forbear for mercy's sake,' exclaimed she, 'you terrify me to distraction: he is one of the holy inquisition, and at his disposal are the issues of life and death.'

"We were interrupted by the entrance of the old Count de Molina, who listened coldly to my frantic expostulations, and beheld with indifference his daughter's tears.

"'Don Pedro,' said he, 'your violence is of no use; my daughter cannot be your's; the holy church has interposed to prevent it, and I desire that you will not henceforth interrupt by your presence the peace of my family.'

"All attempts on my side to see Ildefonsa, or gain admittance into her father's house, were frustrated, and I beheld the fatal day approach in which Ildefonsa was to enter the convent of St. Augusta, and disappear for ever from my view. Frantic and distracted I rushed one evening along the streets, and mechanically bent my steps towards the church of St. Augusta, and met the crowd returning from evening vespers. I entered the holy

sanctuary, and for some moments continued leaning against a marble pillar, my eyes fixed upon the altar, in a species of indistinct reverie. The lamps were burning at the sacred shrine, and the odour of the frankincense yet breathing from the golden censors, spread a soft and delicious perfume. My imagination suddenly represented to me the unhappy Ildefonsa at the foot of the altar, not as when I first beheld her, glowing with health and beauty, but receiving from the hands of the priest the accursed veil. I beheld her pale and trembling, while anguish marked each feature of her lovely face. My sensations becoming too powerful, I was hurrying from the spot, when, at that moment, the Confessor Sebastian stood before me. 'Base wretch! is it you,' cried I, 'who are commissioned by the infernal powers to rob me of Ilde-

fonsa? Be gone, or dread my vengeance. Be gone, I say,' stamping furiously on the ground, 'or, by heaven, I will annihilate you.'

"Young man,' said he, 'forbear; one word more, and I summon you to appear at our holy tribunal, there to receive the punishment which your unjustifiable violence merits.'

'Go yourself, and impeach me to your infernal master, Satan,' cried I, drawing my dagger, and plunging it into the heart of the wretch, who fell on the pavement writhing in the agonies of death.

"The church was instantly filled with a furious multitude; I was dragged to the dungeons of the Inquisition, and after two years of suffering and imprisonment, condemned to the flames at the next Auto da Fé. I prepared to meet my doom, with gloomy tranquillity, the natural consequence

of despair, and on the day appointed, decorated with *San Benito*, with several others was fixed to the stake. The eager flames began to seize their victims, when a deluge of rain, such as I never again beheld, descended in torrents; the forked lightning flashed terror to the exulting crowd, and the rolling thunder completely dispersed them; I fell senseless from the stake among the extinguished embers. On recovering my recollection, I saw that I was in a low apartment, lying on the ground, and several chirurgical instruments near me; a lamp was burning on the floor, and the door of the apartment open. I gazed stupidly for some moments, when suddenly recollecting myself I roused every energy of my soul to exertion, and extinguishing the light, darted out at the door, and wandered in the suburbs of the city by star light, half famished, and unknowing where to

seek shelter. Towards morning I was accosted by a stranger, who after a few moments conversation made signs for me to follow him; I did so: we turned down a narrow lane, and my conductor taking out a key, opened the door of an apartment, and when we had entered closed it carefully after us. He set bread and wine upon the table, and some broiled fish, which I almost devoured, and when satisfied, he addressed me thus:—

"Wounded, famished, and destitute, you seem suited for my purpose; I command a gallant troop of freebooters, in the forests of Guadelaire, we lead jolly, careless lives, and levy contributions on our fellow citizens without remorse, for they have driven us by their cruelty and intrigues to roam like beasts of prey; depriving us of those means necessary for procuring an honest subsistence, they have

forced us to become plunderers and assassins; unite with us,' continued he, 'in waging war upon mankind, and in revenging those injuries which your appearance denotes you to have suffered.'

"'Tell me, I beseech you,' said I, 'what is become of Don Pedro de Tudella, two years ago chief seneschal of Madrid.'

"'His goods were confiscated,' replied the other, 'his palace razed to the ground, himself and his wife driven into banishment, where it seems they died in extreme poverty; their history is well known, and excited pity even in our bosoms, though he had frequently, in the discharge of his office, persecuted us; the old Count de Molina is yet alive, but his daughter Ildefonsa, who was said to be the cause of all their disasters, died of a broken heart before she took the veil. I be-

lieve Don Pedro perished at the last Auto di Fê, unless he died in the prisons of the Inquisition.'

"'No, by heavens,' exclaimed I, starting up in a frenzy, gnashing my teeth, and tearing my hair, 'no, he yet lives to revenge their death, by waging eternal war with mankind, and being familiarised to deeds of blood: I am your's; lead me to the desert; the roaring of wild beasts, the clash of swords, the blasts of the lightning, and terrors of the storm, are congenial to the feelings of my breast. My aged father, my mother, dragged from their peaceful homes, to perish in exile; Ildefonsa too, all, all perished by the machinations of a villain; but he paid the forfeit of his crime; I beheld him, writhing in torrents of blood at my feet, and hark! I hear his black soul howl in the midnight tempest.'

"Exhausted by the violence of my

feelings, I sunk into apathy, from which I was roused by my conductor at break of day; he entered with a parcel in his hand, containing a dress, similar to the one he wore, which, when I had put on, we mounted on mules, took the road leading to these mountains, and I became one of this troop of daring fellows, fearless of danger, and undaunted in the pursuit of prey. A few years ago, Pelos, their chief, fell in a skirmish with some merchants, on the road between Catalherd and this place, upon which they elected me in his stead, and these, my brave fellows, serve me with fidelity and zeal, and I share their dangers and fatigues."

"Aye, that he does," echoed through the hall, and a health to their noble chief, Don Pedro de Tudella, was drank with wild uproar and tumultuous alacrity. Turning to his guests,

Tudella offered to conduct Isabella to his own couch, as the night was far advanced, and having left her to repose, he returned with Alphonso to the hall, where they continued in conversation till the ruddy streaks of light immersed the horizon.

Isabella and Alphonso prepared to take leave of the unfortunate Tudella, who dismissed them with mournful solemnity:—"Happy may ye remain, blest in each other's love, and may your destiny be unlike that of mine and the hapless Ildefonsa!" His stern countenance relaxed, and a gleam of tenderness shone for a moment in his eyes. Turning from them, he called two of his comrades, "Guard them, my friends, through the forest; at your hands I shall require their safety." So saying, he embraced Alphonso, and dismissed them, lingering at the gate of the castle till the windings of the forest hid him

from their view. They pursued their road, and towards evening reached the skirts of the forest, and their guides pointed out to them the distant spires of Saragossa, at the foot of a mountain. Their first care on arriving there was to receive the nuptial benediction, and Alphonso had soon to alleviate the sufferings, and watch by the couch of Isabella, whose fatigues and agitation of mind had occasioned a dangerous illness. As soon as she was sufficiently recovered, they set out, and crossing the Pyrennees, reached Bayonne, at which place," continued Rimini, "I became acquainted with Alphonso; a detachment of the guards which I commanded was stationed in that part of the town which they inhabited. I was charmed with each, and prevailed upon them to accompany me on my return to Paris. Their faithful friend Don Juan of Tortosa has pro-

cured for his friend a diplomatic employment in South America: they are soon to repair thither. The gentleman in black with them at the Louvre is Don Juan, who is come to Paris to negociate some civil transactions.

END OF VOL. I.

B. Clarke, Printer, Well-Street, London.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
3 0112 056547448